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MEMOIRS

OF THE

REIGN OF GEORGE III.

TO

THE COMMENCEMENT

OF THE

YEAR 1799.

BY W. BELSHAM.

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VOL. VI.

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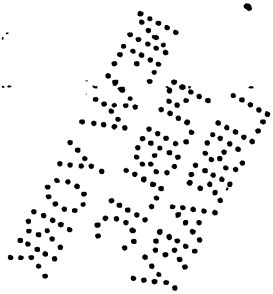

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HISTORY

OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

GEORGE III.

BOOK XXII.

Session of Parliament, 1795-6. *Insults offered to the King. Debates upon the Address. Treason and Sedition Bills. Prosecution of Mr. Reeve. Mr. Whitbread's Bill to fix the Price of Labour. Extravagant Loan of the Minister. Message from the King, announcing the Re-establishment of regular Government in France. Pacific Motion of Mr. Grey. Motion by Mr. Wilberforce for the Repeal of the Slave-Trade. Motion by Mr. Grey for a Committee of Enquiry. Second Loan of Mr. Pitt. Financial Resolutions moved by Mr. Grey. Motion by the Marquis of Lansdown for the Appointment of a Committee of Finance. Address to the King moved by the Earl of Guildford and Mr. Fox. Close of the Session. Military Operations,* 1796. *March of the Generals Moreau and Jourdain into the Heart of Germany. Defeat of Jourdain. Celebrated Retreat of Moreau. Wonderful Successes of General Bonaparte in Italy. Austrians defeated at Montenotte and at Millesimo. Armistice concluded with the*

BOOK XXII. 1795. On the king's return from the house of peers, notwithstanding these outrages, no additional escort was ordered for the protection of the royal person; and though the gates of the Horse Guards were shut, the crowd already assembled in the Park immediately re-commenced their audacious attacks. The king at length reached St. James's; and after a short interval he went into his private carriage, in order to rejoin the royal family at the queen's palace. But the rage of the misguided populace was not yet exhausted. The state coach, on its return to the Mews, was nearly demolished by one part of the mob, while the other daringly attempted to stop the private carriage of the king, and even to force open the doors. This was a grosser insult and outrage than had ever been offered to any monarch of Great Britain since the days of Charles I.; and yet, for many years previous to this strange incident, the king had enjoyed great popularity, though it was somewhat diminished of late with a large proportion of his subjects, by his supposed enmity to all political reform, and his predilection for the present destructive war. At this last attack the king seemed to lose his characteristic firmness, and was evidently struck with amazement and consternation. Upon the arrival, at a critical moment, of a party of life-guards, however, the populace were at length

dispersed, and the king with great difficulty and even danger reached the queen's house in safety. An outrage so unparalleled excited the deep and universal resentment of all orders of persons throughout the nation. Those who conceived the king to be most misled and deceived by the arts of his ministers highly respected the private virtues and good intentions of the monarch, and detested, perhaps much more sincerely than the sycophants of the court, this monstrous violation of duty and decorum.

A proclamation was immediately published, offering a reward of a thousand pounds, to be paid on the conviction of any person who should be found concerned in this daring and criminal assault. But it is remarkable that no one who had been guilty of any actual violence was ever discovered. A man named Kidd Wake, by profession a journeyman printer, and some others, were indeed proved to be among the number of the hissers and disturbers of the king's peace, and were punished with excessive severity*. Ad-

* Vide Narrative published by Wake.—This poor man, whose general character was unexceptionable, solemnly declares that the only offence he was guilty of consisted in joining the multitude in exclaiming "No War!" and occasionally hissing, by way of expressing the dislike they entertained of it; and that he abhorred as much as any one the idea of offering any violence to the person of his majesty.

BOOK XXII. 1795.

dresses from both houses of parliament, the city of London, &c. were presented to the king, expressing, in strong terms, their indignation and abhorrence of the late atrocious procedure. Immediately after this business was disposed of, the speech delivered from the throne was taken into consideration. In it his majesty had declared, "that it was a great satisfaction to him to reflect, that, notwithstanding the many events unfavorable to the common cause, the prospect resulting from the general situation of affairs had in many important respects been materially improved in the course of the present year." His majesty further observed, "that the distraction and anarchy which had so long prevailed in France had now led to a crisis, of which it was as yet impossible to see the issue. Should this crisis terminate in any order of things compatible with the tranquillity of other countries, and affording a reasonable expectation of security and permanence in any treaty which might be concluded, the appearance of a disposition to negotiate for a general peace, on just and suitable terms, would not fail to be met on his part with an earnest desire to give it the fullest and speediest effect." His majesty, at the close of his speech, mentioned the great anxiety which he felt at the very high price of grain, and re-

commended a diligent consideration of such measures as might tend to alleviate the present distress. BOOK XXII. 1795.

The address being moved and seconded in the house of commons, Mr. Fox rose, and in very indignant language reprobated both the speech and its authors. "Was it not enough (he asked) to persist for three years in a war of miserable speculation—to add an hundred millions to the public debt—to load the people with four millions of additional taxes—and to see them reduced to a state of famine—but they must be insulted by the falsehood of being told their situation was improved? How improved? Was it an improvement that France had overrun the Palatinate, and captured Manheim? or that the enemy had abandoned some posts in Italy, of which they were not a year ago in possession? If the disasters of the war had impressed upon the ministers a conviction of the necessity of peace, he should indeed deem our situation improved. But the distresses of the French were held out as a subject of exultation. France was last year said to be in her last agonies: although since that declaration she had made the most brilliant campaign that her history had for ages exhibited. The depreciation of paper currency in France had been the incessant tale with which parliament had been Debates upon the address.

BOOK XXII. 1795.

deluded from year to year, notwithstanding the recent and similar example of America.—Mr. Fox said, that the specious theoretical arguments of the minister for the continuance of the war might suit well a literary or political disputant, and might amuse in a club-room or a pamphlet, but they were utterly unworthy of any man who took upon him the name and office of a statesman. Last session the ministers had, by a resolution of parliament, avowed their readiness to enter into a negotiation whenever a government was established in France capable of maintaining the relations of peace and amity. But was negotiation offered when such a government appeared? It was a matter of fact, that France did maintain such relations; since Prussia, Spain, and divers of the German princes, even the elector of Hanover himself, had made peace with her; and experience had proved, that neither the changes of men, nor of constitutions, affected the engagements they had formed with foreign countries. The only true and wise dependence for the continuance of peace was the equity of the terms on which it was made, and the interest both parties had in keeping it. The offer of negotiation (he thought) ought to come from us, as having made declarations which stood in the way of negotiation. He therefore moved an amend-

ment, which, after enumerating the various disasters of the campaign, and stating from experience that the French were able to maintain the accustomed relations of peace and amity with other nations, prayed his majesty that such terms of peace should be offered to the French republic as should be consistent with the honor of the crown, and with the security and interests of the people."

Mr. Pitt opposed the amendment in vehement language, insisting, as usual, upon the ruined and undone state of the French finances, 720 millions of assignats being at the present time in circulation. When he considered their total inability to carry on the war for another campaign, he could not doubt but the situation of things was materially improved. The new constitution of France Mr. Pitt highly commended, when compared with the preceding forms; and supposing it to be put into activity with such acquiescence of the nation as to enable their representatives to speak on behalf of the people of France, he had no difficulty in saying, that all objections to the form and principles of that government, as obstacles to negotiation, would be at an end; but that the manifestation of any precipitate and premature desire for peace would in present circumstances be the most fatal event that could possibly happen.

BOOK XXII. 1795.

The duke of Bedford, in the house of lords, proposed an amendment to the address similar to that of Mr. Fox in the house of commons; but in both houses the amendments were negatived by very great majorities.

On the 4th of November a very remarkable proclamation was issued, announcing, that, immediately before the opening of the present session, great numbers of persons had collected in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, to the endangering of the public peace, and that such proceedings were followed, on the day of the meeting of parliament, by acts of tumult and violence, to the immediate hazard of his majesty's person; and enjoining all justices of the peace, sheriffs, &c. to use their utmost diligence to prevent and suppress all seditious and unlawful assemblies, &c. This proclamation was on the same day laid before both houses of parliament.

Treason bill.

The house of peers having been summoned on the motion of lord Grenville for the 6th of November, his lordship, at the close of a long speech, presented to the house a bill for the safety and preservation of his majesty's person and government against treasonable and seditious practices and attempts. "Whatever variations (his lordship observed) there might be in this bill, from the precedents of former times,

he assured their lordships that they would be found only to deviate so far as the peculiar forms of existing circumstances required. The precedents to which he referred were those in the reign of Elizabeth and Charles II.—acts passed in *approved times*: and he doubted not but their lordships would agree with him in the necessity there was of applying a speedy remedy to those dangerous practices which have endangered not only the safety of the constitution but the life of the sovereign."—The earl of Lauderdale observed, that, "by the bill then introduced, a variety of new crimes and new treasons would be added to the criminal code of this country, and it would effect a total alteration of the laws respecting treason, and a most dangerous innovation upon the constitution. He thought it extraordinary that so strong a measure should be proposed before there was the least evidence to prove the slightest connection between the meetings of Chalk-Farm and the outrage on his majesty, or that the treason and sedition complained of did actually exist." Upon examination of this bill it was in fact found to contain an amazing heap of wild and new-fangled treasons, of which, beyond comparison, the most dangerous was "malicious and advised SPEAKING!"—an innovation upon the spirit and antient practice of the constitution so infamous

BOOK XXII. 1795.

and abominable, that even the abject and slavish parliament of king James II. an assembly garbled to serve the purposes of that odious tyrant, hesitated to pass a law to that effect.—This clause lord Grenville, after much debate, the times being not yet ripe for so atrocious a measure, consented to omit; and the operation of the bill was limited to the life of the reigning sovereign—the bill itself being by this means converted into a standing parliamentary libel against the king; as if this monarch could want more or stronger safe-guards for the security of his person than the best of his predecessors had done, or his successors were likely to do. When the bill was under discussion in the committee, where it underwent some farther softenings, the great talents of lord Thurlow were exerted to prove how superfluous, as well as odious, it was altogether. The language of the bill this great lawyer asserted to be vague, indefinite, and highly dangerous to the subject; and he gave it as his decided opinion, that the present laws of the country were fully adequate to the punishment of the crimes which the bill was professedly framed to embrace; and that it could in no degree conduce to the safety of the king, or the preservation of the constitution. The bill in question, exclusive of its creating a chaos of treasons, in the same spirit of tyranny, increased

the punishment which the law had provided for the crime of sedition; enacting, that, on a second conviction, the offender shall be liable to transportation for the term of seven years. The duke of Bedford expressed, in strong language, his abhorrence of the spirit and principle of the bill, and particularly of this clause, which he regarded as a wanton outrage upon the subject. "What might not be construed into sedition? and who (said his grace) could consider himself as wholly uninterested in the operation of this clause, now that the *good times* of Charles II. were made the example to copy after?" The duke animadverted in pointed terms upon the extraordinary declaration of Horseley, bishop of Rochester, in the course of the debate, 'that speculative and philosophical disquisitions upon the subject of government, though they might be *allowed*, did more harm than good; but that public discussions of such topics ought to be prevented; and that he did not know, in fact, what the mass of the people in any country had to do with the laws but to obey them.' "This doctrine, (his grace said) from the mouth of a mufti, might be attributed to ignorance; but when pronounced in the legislature of this free country by the lips of a British prelate, must excite amazement and indignation."—Severe as the new provisions against the offence of sedition

BOOK XXII. 1795.

appeared, in comparison of those which had hitherto been found amply sufficient for every useful and practical purpose, they were mildness itself compared with the barbarous latitude of the Scottish law upon this head. The earl of Lauderdale, therefore, very seasonably and properly, though unavailingly, moved that the operation of the act might, as to this point, be extended to that kingdom; for, unless it could be shown that heavier penalties were necessary to suppress sedition in a Scotchman than an Englishman, he could not comprehend the wisdom or policy of the Scottish code.—The bill at length passed, though in a state very different from that in which it had been at first introduced, and with the appendage of a protest signed by the duke of Bedford, and the earls of Derby and Lauderdale.

Sedition bill.

A measure extremely analogous to this was, about the same time, introduced into the lower house by Mr. Pitt; who moved, November the 10th, that leave be given to bring in a bill for the more effectually preventing seditious meetings and assemblies. On this occasion, Mr. Pitt began by painting in glowing colours the criminal and outrageous insults committed upon the person of the king on the first day of the session. He said, however, that the purport of his motion was not to alter or enforce the laws for the king's

safety, because the other house had a bill before them to that effect, but to prevent those meetings to which all the mischiefs he had mentioned might be attributed. If the house meant that such enormities should be totally averted, they should adopt some means of putting an end to those seditious assemblies, which served as vehicles to faction and disloyalty, which fanned and kept alive the flame of disaffection, and filled the minds of the people with discontent. BOOK XXII. 1795.

If, in conformity with these ideas, Mr. Pitt had proposed some temporary measure, adapted to the real exigencies of the times, for the prevention of those tumultuous popular assemblies which had of late been so frequently held in the fields and commons adjoining to the metropolis, and resorted to as the great fountain of political information and the chosen medium of reform, no rational person would have disputed the propriety of his precautions; but it quickly appeared, that the disguised object of this bill was to put an end to all public discussion or deliberative investigation of public measures. The rising dissatisfaction of the nation had of late clearly manifested itself; and the daring design of the minister was to destroy all indications of that dissatisfaction in the nascent state; to make as much as possible every expression of discontent against the ministry, who called themselves the

BOOK XXII. 1795.

GOVERNMENT, criminal and dangerous, by enacting a multiplicity of provisions, complex, tedious, and burdensome, an exact conformity to which was essential, even to the convening any public meeting,—and, when such meeting was actually assembled, by investing any venal magistrate with a power of dissolving it whenever any language which he might be pleased to construe into sedition should be uttered by any person present at it. The magistrate was further empowered to apprehend the persons offending on the spot, and all resistance to his authority was declared to be felony. And, by a clause of the proposed bill, if fifty persons or more meet, and, after an order to disperse, twelve shall remain one hour, it was made DEATH, without benefit of clergy. The right of petitioning, that most sacred of political privileges and duties, and which necessarily involves in it the right of free discussion and investigation of all public measures, was not likely to be exercised to any obnoxious purpose when chained and fettered by such limitations. Men of high and independent minds would feel themselves degraded by an attendance at any public meetings upon such terms as these. If the bill once passed, it was evident that the privilege of petitioning was virtually and practically lost.

This bill met with an opposition, both within

and without doors, so vigorous and resolute as to demonstrate that the flame of liberty in England was not yet extinguished. No sooner had the motion been read by the speaker than Mr. Fox rose and declared that the indignation he felt at the atrocious insult offered to the king was not inferior to that of any man, but he should do injustice to his feelings were he not to avow that it was equalled by the indignation he experienced in consequence of the motion he had just heard. If Mr. Pitt meant to found this execrable measure on the flimsy pretext of the public meetings lately held in the vicinity of the metropolis, let him at least make some attempt to prove the connection between them. That the violence offered to his majesty was the result of these meetings, there existed no color of evidence. It seemed to be the object of the mover of this bill, to bring the public gradually to submit to the most rigid despotism. If the principle of this measure were admitted by the house, Mr. Fox protested that in the discussion of the detail he would take no part. Public meetings for the discussion of public topics were not only lawful, but of the very essence of the constitution, and Englishmen had immemorially enjoyed this liberty. Now it seems they are no longer to do so, unless notice be given to a magistrate empowered to arrest any person

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BOOK XXII. 1795.

whom in his wisdom he might deem seditious; and who had authority to dissolve the meeting by the *fiat* of his own will. SAY at ONCE that a free constitution is no longer suitable to England! Conduct yourselves as the senators of Denmark formerly did! Renounce your liberties, and accept of despotism; but do not mock the understanding and feelings of mankind by telling the world you are free. Can a meeting under such restraints as the bill imposes and requires be called a meeting of freemen? Will the people of this country suffer their feelings to be thus insulted? Or is it possible they can regard this measure in any other light than as a total extinction of their liberty? He trusted that the people would be alarmed at the prospect of the state preparing for them, and that they would assemble while they might, to concert the means of averting a stroke so fatal. Those who failed to do so he pronounced traitors to their country. He declared his resolution, if this bill was persisted in, of moving a call of the house.

After a variety of speeches from the principal members of opposition, reprobating the bill in terms of the utmost indignation and asperity, Mr. Wilberforce, who had during the two last sessions acted so independent and honorable a part, rose, and, in terms the most unqualified, acknowledged his acquiescence in, and approba-

tion of, the measure. "For three years (he said) attempts had been made to poison the minds of the people, by disseminating false principles of liberty; and not of liberty merely, but of philosophy and religion likewise. That all this had not been without effect, recent events had afforded sufficient proof, and he thought the administration entitled to the thanks of the nation for adopting the necessary measures of restraint and prevention. He did not regard the bill proposed by his right honorable friend as militating against the right of discussing political questions, and rather thought that right would acquire new life and vigor when those assemblies at which public discussions took place should be brought under proper regulations!" The bill was ordered in by a majority of 214 to 42 voices.

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Mr. Fox now moved for a call of the house, which was acceded to by Mr. Pitt, who observed, notwithstanding, that the bill would be produced in a day or two, and that it might be read a first and a second time, and go through the committee, before the call.—Mr. Grey urged the right the people of England had to expect that a bill of such dreadful import should at least be discussed in a full house; and hoped time would be given at least to utter the last bitter groans of expiring liberty. The call was at

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length fixed for the 24th of November. In the mean time, the nation at large, or at least all who retained any sense of the inestimable value of the blessings of liberty, had taken the alarm at the bills now depending, and meetings were convened in a great number of counties, cities, and boroughs, to petition parliament against the passing of them into laws. The Corresponding Society, whose imprudent proceedings had afforded the pretext for these nefarious and liberticidal measures, met, for the last time, in the field near Copenhagen House, November 12, in prodigious numbers. The greatest decorum was notwithstanding observed, and petitions were agreed on to the king and two houses of parliament against the bills in question, after which they dispersed in the most perfect order. In a very short time, near a hundred other petitions, amongst which was a very memorable one from the city of Westminster*, were presented to

* This bold, animated, and energetic petition states, "that the only mode by which the people of Great Britain can express their sentiments and make their grievances known is by meeting together, either to instruct their representatives, to petition parliament, or to address the king. This is their privilege, and subject to the existing laws, which have already provided against the abuse of it. Your petitioners do, in the language of their forefathers, 'claim, demand, and insist,' upon the free exercise of it, as their true antient and indubitable right. Your honorable

parliament against the bills, signed by more than 130,000 persons; but no consideration could check the minister in his headlong career, supported as he was by vast majorities of both houses. BOOK XXII. 1795.

On the 16th of November the Treason Bill was sent down from the lords, and, after encountering great resistance in every stage, it finally passed into an act most disgraceful to the code of English statutes.

On the second reading of the Sedition Bill, Mr. Erskine distinguished himself by some very animated remarks against it. "An act of this description (he said) was never thought of in the reign of king Charles II. after all the horrors and confusion of the former reign. It was never at-

honorable house is humbly reminded—that the right of the people to such meetings is the best security they possess against the abuse of power. If they who are delegated to defend their liberties basely or corruptly betray them; if they who are sent to watch over ministers become their accomplices,—what may the people do if they may not remonstrate? By the bill now depending no meeting can be called except with the knowledge of a magistrate, whose presence is made necessary not merely for the preservation of the peace, but for the purpose of controlling the sentiments to be uttered. He is constituted sole judge of the manner in which a grievance may be stated, or a right asserted. To differ with him in political opinion is made a breach of the peace; to maintain that opinion is made a riot; and to persist in it is to incur the horrors of military execution."——

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tempted in the reign of king William, when the government was newly established during a disputed succession; or in either of the two subsequent reigns, when rebellions raged in the heart of the kingdom.—He defied the whole profession of the law to prove that the bill then before the house was consonant to the principles of the constitution. The constitution was abrogated and annulled by it. Our ancestors were content to wait till some overt act appeared which was the subject of punishment: but, under this bill, the determination of a magistrate was to interfere between the people and the assertion of their rights, or the complaint of their grievances.—How easy would it be for the spy of a corrupt magistrate, by going to a meeting and uttering a few seditious words, whether apposite to the subject or not, to afford a pretence for dissolving the meeting. The law of the land (this great constitutional lawyer affirmed) was fully adequate to all the purposes of good government without the introduction of the present measure. In any public meeting, when a breach of the peace was committed, a magistrate, by the existing law, was entitled to interfere, and, in his support, was authorized to raise the *posse comitatis* if necessary; and also by the Riot Act he had the power of dispersing tumultuous assemblies.—The minister was now attempting

to brand with the imputation of sedition all those who employed the same language which Mr. Pitt himself had once held. But under the sanction of the venerable father of this apostate minister, the great earl of Chatham, he would maintain that the people of England might and ought to defend their rights, if necessary, by the last extremity to which free-men could resort. For my part (exclaimed this celebrated advocate of the constitution), I shall never cease to struggle in support of liberty. In no situation will I desert the cause. I was born a free-man, I will never die a slave!"

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On the 23d of November a debate took place in consequence of a variety of petitions presented against the bills. Mr. Sturt, on offering that of the Corresponding Society, justified that body from the aspersions thrown out against them and their writings; and, to prove that things at least equally exceptionable had appeared from the partizans of the ministry, he read to the house several passages from a pamphlet published by Mr. Reeves, president of the London Association, in which that gentleman had, amongst other curious positions, asserted, "that the government of England was a monarchy; that the monarchy was the ancient stock from which have sprung those goodly branches of the legislature, the lords and commons; that these, however, were

Prosecution of Mr. Reeves.

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still only branches, and that they might be lopped off, and the tree be a tree still—shorn indeed of its honors, but not, like them, cast into the fire." This contemptible trash was taken up as a very serious matter by the house, and not only voted to be a libel upon the constitution, which was very superfluous, but, in consequence of an address for that purpose to the king, the attorney-general was ordered to commence a prosecution against the author, which was very indefensible. But by the verdict of an intelligent jury, who were sensible that opinions ought to be free, he was subsequently acquitted, to the great satisfaction of his more generous political adversaries.

When the house went (November 27) into a committee on the Sedition Bill, Mr. Fox, true to his first declaration of not debating the bill in detail, immediately rose and left the house, followed by the principal members of opposition. A very material amendment was, however, made in the committee, by inserting a clause, limiting the duration of the bill to three years—a concession no doubt extorted from the minister by the alarm excited in every part of the country by this measure.

On the 3d of December, the day appointed for the third reading, the friends of liberty in the house appeared for the last time in opposition to

this odious and tyrannical law. Mr. Fox, in a memorable speech, expressed his deep concern to see a spirit of despotism in ministers encouraged by that house, which tended to take away the very vestige of liberty in this country. If such measures, said this illustrious statesman, be persisted in against the decided voice of the majority of the people, the question of resistance must ultimately be not a question of moral duty, but of prudence; and not of prudence only, but of justice also. But he confessed that in his opinion prudence dictated quietness to mankind under many severe oppressions. Now that the ardor of youth was passed, he saw clearly the wisdom of a maxim which he had formerly been too ready to contemn. It was the saying of one of the greatest men of antiquity, "*Iniquissimam pacem justissimo bello anteferо.*" But if regardless of this prudential maxim the people of England, exasperated by a series of measures calculated to reduce them to the condition of slaves, should be driven to acts of resistance, ministers might condemn them, parliament might condemn them, the law might condemn them, prudence might condemn them, but he believed no good man would ever accuse them of moral guilt. Mr. Fox concluded with declaring that whatever artifices might be employed by the sycophants of power to represent him as an

BOOK XXII 1795. enemy to his country he would persist in doing his duty to the public, and never relinquish it but with his life; exclaiming in the words of CICERO, "*Nobile jusjurandum juravi ne quid omitterem ut respublica salva sit.*"—The bill, after a lengthened debate, was passed by a majority of 200 voices, and the same day sent up to the lords, where it was vigorously but unavailingly opposed by the marquis of Lansdown, the earls of Derby and Moira, and lord Thurlow, who stigmatized it as "a bad bill, establishing a dangerous and unconstitutional precedent. Not that the bill oppugned the right of the subject to discuss public grievances—No: it only rendered the enjoyment of that right impracticable. The liberties of the country were to be exercised in chains. His lordship contrasted in a striking manner the provisions of the present bill with those of the Riot Act. By the latter, the persons assembled for an unlawful purpose did not incur the penalty of death, unless they continued together riotously and tumultuously for one hour after the act had been read. By the former, if an assembly convened for the mere discussion of public topics continued together peaceably, to the number of twelve or more, for one hour after proclamation was made commanding them to disperse, they were guilty of felony, without benefit of clergy. For such a

bill as the present (his lordship declared) he was fully determined not to vote." On the 14th of December, the bill was read a third time, and passed by the usual majority. It was accompanied by two protests, the first of which expressed in simple, the second in energetic, language, the chief arguments against the bill. BOOK XXII. 1795.

In the early part of the session, a great variety of expedients were suggested, and some adopted, by the house of commons, for alleviating the distresses of the poor, by lowering the price of bread-corn. Bills were introduced to alter the existing laws relative to the assize of bread; to prohibit the manufacture of starch from wheat; to prohibit the distilling from any articles of grain; to prevent obstruction in the transit of grain, &c.—So far as these laws operated at all, the operation was allowed to be beneficial. But a more direct and radical remedy for the existing evil, as it affected the most useful and necessary branch of the community, was proposed by Mr. Whitbread, who, on the 9th of December, brought in a bill to enable justices at the quarter session to regulate the price of labor. This was powerfully supported by Mr. Fox, Mr. Jekyl, Mr. Lechmere, and many other respectable persons: but it was opposed in a very elaborate speech by Mr. Pitt, who exhorted the house to seek for some other remedy more com- Mr. Whitbread's bill to fix the price of labor.

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prehensive in its object, less exceptionable i example, and less dangerous in its applica He made a very florid harangue upon the e ing system of poor's laws, which he censure very erroneous, and asserted that much of evils complained of might be remedied by a formation in those laws, which had been alre begun; and it was his wish and intention correct their defects, to free them from the ruption by which they were obscured, and to store them to their original purity. The ch cellor of the Exchequer thus interposing his ve the motion of Mr. Whitbread passed in the gative. The poor therefore throughout the ki dom were kept from perishing only by volunt subscriptions; and national charity poorly co compensated for the absence of national justi

It may be proper in a few words to subjo that, at a subsequent period, Mr. Pitt, agr ably to his engagement, brought in a bill for t reform of the poor's laws, so absurd, so indige ed, and so impracticable, that it found not single advocate, either in or out of the hous and the sanguine expectations he had excit of a reform on this, as on other occasions, still higher moment, were most completely di appointed*.

* Vide 'Remarks on Mr. Pitt's Bill, for the Reform of t Poor's Laws.'

One hundred and ten thousand seamen, including marines, and two hundred and seven thousand landmen, were voted for the service of the year. In the extraordinaries of the army estimates, the sum of 314,000*l.* was charged for the expense of erecting barracks, without any previous consent or knowledge of parliament. The general statement of account was brought forward December 7, when Mr. Pitt proposed a loan of 18 millions, exclusive of a vote of credit for two millions and a half. For every hundred pounds in money the subscriber was entitled to 120*l.* 3 per-cents. and 25*l.* 4 per-cents. with an addition of 6*s.* 6*d.* in the Long Annuity. In the course of a severe investigation into the circumstances attending the negotiation of this loan, it appeared that a very extraordinary and marked preference had been given by the minister to the mercantile house of Boyd, though conducted on the professed principle of a free and open competition, and that the equally respectable house of Morgan would have taken it on terms considerably more advantageous to the public—as was stated at large in a very able manner by Mr. William Smith, who moved for a committee of enquiry on this subject. But the chancellor of the Exchequer declared in his vindication that he had pledged himself not to bring a new loan into the market till the last in-

Extravagant loan of the minister.

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stallment on the last year's loan, also conti
for by the house of Boyd, was paid up.
circumstance he had not *recollected* wh
offered a competition; but when it was re
to his memory, he thought himself oblig
give the offer of the new loan to Mr.
This was represented to be as strange a
to forget as improvident to promise. Mr.
undertook to prove that only 1,400,00
mained in the market of the former loa
that, by the prodigal conditions of the p
the sum of 400,000*l.* was lost to the
The most probable motive of the pref
given to the house of Boyd, however, app
in the course of the investigation, to be
this great commercial house had assist
Board of Treasury, distressed beyond
ample for want of money, previous to the
ing of parliament, by drawing fictitious
exchange, ante-dated from Hamburg, up
credit of which cash to a very great amou
advanced to government. Such was the
of this transaction, that though it was not
ed expedient by the Bank of England to
to discount the notes, the governor of the
had, it seems, declared that it would have
ed disgrace upon the character of any
merchant, and have shaken the credit
house. After such a deception, who,

pointedly asked, could in future pretend to distinguish between a fair Treasury bill or a fictitious and collusive one, *fraudulently* framed to answer a temporary purpose: for the solicitor-general acknowledged it to be at least doubtful whether any action could be brought by the holders of those bills. In conclusion, the resolutions of censure moved by Mr. Smith were negatived, and counter-resolutions passed expressive of the approbation of the house at the conduct of the minister. BOOK XXII. 1795.

It is remarkable that the premium or profit on the new loan, previous even to the first deposit, amounted to more than the deposit itself, being computed at the sum of 2,160,000*l.* This was owing to the excessive improvidence, or something worse, of the minister, in neglecting to take advantage of the resolution at length adopted by the government, no longer to persist in their refusal to treat with the French republic.

Message from the king announcing the re-establishment of regular government in France.

On the 8th December a message from his majesty was delivered to the house by Mr. Pitt, announcing "the establishment of such a form of government in France as appeared capable of maintaining the relations of peace and amity, and expressive of his readiness to *meet* any negotiation on the part of the enemy, with a desire to give it the speediest effect in producing a

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peace." And on the following day M moved an address in reply. This gave oc to a debate; and Mr. Sheridan propos amendment altogether disclaiming the ic considering any change of government in F as affecting the principle of negotiation praying that a treaty might immediately l tered upon. This amendment was said " perfectly consistent with the spirit of message, which admitted that Great B *might* now safely treat. Where then coul the objection to declare that she *would* with France? It was a vulgar, and indeed most vulgar of opinions, to suppose that it disadvantageous to a power at war to be the to offer terms of peace. The experience of tory proved the reverse? Were peace now c ed on reasonable terms, it would not be pos for the French government to refuse t assent." The minister however insisted on ing left unfettered, and the amendment was gatived without a division *.

Pacific motion of Mr. Grey.

No step however being apparently taken the government towards a pacification, s

* On the 7th of January, 1796, the princess of Wales delivered of a daughter, to whom was given the name of C lotte—and who, as the only issue of the marriage, appears likely, in exclusion of all the male branches of the royal fan to inherit the crown of Britain.

after the recess of parliament Mr. Grey moved (February 15, 1796) for an address to the king, praying him to communicate to the executive government of the French republic his readiness to meet any disposition to negotiate with an earnest desire to give it the speediest effect. The patriotic mover of this address expressed his full expectation that, whilst England was bleeding at every pore, Ministers would have done something towards realizing the fond hopes the nation had been taught to indulge. Taking a review of the disasters which had befallen the allied arms, he observed that a confederacy, destitute of union and concert, and carried on with various and even opposite views, could not be successful. If ministers meant to prove themselves sincere in their desire for peace they ought to make direct proposals, and unequivocally to acknowledge the republic. It might be said this was humiliating to those who had accustomed themselves only to the language of disdain: but misfortune should teach them humility, and submission to an alternative which their folly had rendered inevitable. On the other hand, and in as lofty a tone as if their measures had been crowned with complete success—Mr. Pitt urged confidence in ministers, and observed that, if the house thought this confidence could not be safely vested in them, the proper mode was to

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address his majesty for their removal. serted that the French had almost exh their means of carrying on the war; a that, since his majesty's message had be livered, ministry had taken every measu sistent with the interests of the country, complish the object of it. The point to sidered was the probability of obtaini and honorable terms; but such terms very different from those which the pul clarations of the French had for a long ti indicated. The question being put, t tion was of course negatived by a gre jority.

Motion by Mr. Wilberforce for the repeal of the slave-trade.

On the 18th of February, Mr. Wilberf newed his annual motion, perhaps bette ted, since the feelings of the house had come callous upon the subject, for the a of the slave-trade. The motion was su nevertheless with eloquence and ardor Fox, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Smith, and others; was opposed with equal vehemence by liam Yonge, Mr. Dundas, and general T member for Liverpool, the chief empo this horrid traffic. The general at length to postpone the farther consideration business for four months, which was ult carried, to the equal astonishment and of the chancellor of the Exchequer, w

fluence unfortunately extended to every question but this.

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A great variety of papers on the subject of finance having been some weeks before the house, Mr. Grey, on the 10th of March, moved that the house should resolve itself into a committee to enquire into the state of the nation, enforcing his motion by a speech replete with information of the most interesting nature. On taking the estimate of the three preceding years of the war, we had added 77 millions to the capital of our funded debt. Whatever sums had been voted by parliament were invariably upon estimate, but the real expense was much greater. In addition to the parliamentary grants, enormous sums of money had been expended without the consent of parliament. At the beginning of the war the minister had pledged himself, as far as possible, to keep down the extraordinaries of the army and navy, and to prevent the accumulation of unfunded debt: but it was a fact that the whole aggregate of the extraordinaries incurred in the wars of king William and queen Anne did not amount to one half of the extraordinaries of the present year. The total of the sums spent in this war of defeat and disgrace, without the consent of parliament, Mr. Grey stated at 31,280,000*l.* of which 1,100,000*l.* had been applied to the erection of *barracks*—

Motion by Mr. Grey for a committee of enquiry.

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termed with propriety, by judge Blac
'inland fortresses.' But the enormous
of the expenditure was by no means tl
or the most alarming circumstance atten
The mode of advancing money to the
ment by the Bank had undoubtedly the s
of parliament, but it was a practice whi
been limited and restrained by the c
tional jealousy of the legislature. No
was better understood in that house th
no advance beyond a specified limit s
made to government by the Bank in a
tion of the revenue. This prevented th
ster from having a command of money
the consent of parliament, and it also
the Bank to afford that commercial ass
which was the primary object of the insti
These salutary maxims had been most
violated by the present minister, and his c
had been greatly distressing to the com
part of the country. On the 1st of J
1793, the Bank was in advance to gove
11,643,000*l.* which accounted for the in
of the directors to assist as usual the mer
credit. This practice had been provided
by the act of William and Mary, whic
blished the company; but when a bill
vote of credit a few sessions ago passed t
the house, a clause was surreptitiously intr

which entirely frustrated the salutary purposes of the act in this respect. A vast floating debt, Mr. Grey said, remained to be provided for, notwithstanding the loan already negotiated; and the amount of the taxes already imposed during the war, or existing previous to it, fell short of the annual revenue which would be necessary for the support even of a peace establishment, no less than two millions and a half. And Mr. Grey conjured the house, in an eloquent peroration, to dread the over-grown influence of a minister whose whole conduct was radically hostile to the fundamental principles of our constitution.

In reply, Mr. Jenkinson insisted that the present posture of affairs afforded no sufficient ground for enquiry, and that the increased expense of wars was owing to the increased prosperity of the nation. If the war was just and necessary, which he should always maintain, since it had been sanctioned by parliament, he did not see how the expense of the war, which was also sanctioned by parliament, should become a proper subject of their enquiry; and he therefore moved the order of the day; which, with much debate, was carried by a large majority.

That Mr. Grey did not in any degree exag-

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gerate the public embarrassments, and th
sterial misconduct which had occasioned
but too soon and too plainly appeared; fo

Second loan of Mr. Pitt.

a short interval, Mr. Pitt came forward
proposition (April 18) for a second loan,
amount of seven millions and a half, in or
he said, to take out of the market a great
tion of the paper constituting the unfunde
which was contracted for on nearly the
terms as the former. Far from discoveri
symptoms of solicitude at the unparallele
mity of these successive demands—amc
to 43 millions and a half sterling in f
months, for paying the interest upon
new taxes were imposed, in perpetuity,
amount of 3,300,000*l.*—Mr. Pitt hope
nothing would discourage the house fro
severing in a war whose end was so la
He insisted, as he had often before don
the ruined state of the finances of
and concluded by exclaiming: "The u
issue of the contest must be glorious, if
not wanting to ourselves! We shall,
blessing of Providence, deliver ourselves fi
worst of dangers, and at the same time t
to posterity a most useful lesson, that
rupt, turbulent, and lawless, nation cann
sure itself with the spontaneous and

gulated conduct of a free and loyal country!" After much warm discussion, the resolutions moved by Mr. Pitt were agreed to. BOOK XXII. 1796.

It is worthy of remark, that, in the year 1782, a committee, of which Mr. Pitt was a member, was appointed by parliament to examine the public accounts of the kingdom; and, in their report, they observe, "that the enormous amount of the extraordinaries incurred without the consent of the parliament is an abuse of the most alarming nature, enabling ministers to deceive the nation by keeping back the great expenses of the war, and concealing thereby the extent of its engagements." In the short space of three years, which had elapsed since the commencement of it, a debt, funded and unfunded, scarcely short of a hundred millions, had been already contracted, and all enquiry into the necessity of this incredible expenditure uniformly denied. Surely then it cannot be too harsh to characterize the financial administration of Mr. Pitt as exhibiting a system infamously improvident. If a national bankruptcy should be the ultimate, as it seems the inevitable, result of this system, let us thank GOD that the LAND remains, and that no extravagance of kings or ministers can annihilate it. If the government of Great Britain could have had such communion with the inhabitants of the sun or moon, or any other agents

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visible or invisible, as by parting with territory, to have obtained the means of supplying their immediate purposes, there would not have been by this time, probably, an acre of ground left for an Englishman to have set his foot upon.

Financial resolutions moved by Mr. Grey.

Nothing very remarkable occurred in parliament after this till the beginning of May, when Mr. Grey brought forward an elaborate series of resolutions, tending to establish the following conclusions:—That ministers had violated the express stipulations of the Appropriatior Act, by applying grants to other services thai those for which they were voted; that they ha presented false accounts to the house, to conce this infraction; that they had violated anoth law for regulating the office of paymaster-gener of the forces. The resolutions were no less th fifteen in number; the last of which stated th in the instances specified, his majesty's mi sters had been guilty of presenting false accour calculated to mislead the judgment of the ho —of a flagrant violation of various acts of par ment, and of a gross misapplication of the pu money: and Mr. Grey declared, at the s time, his purpose, if these resolutions were ried, to make them the basis of an impeachn for high crimes and misdemeanours.—Mr. C requested the house to recollect that there an act passed every session, after the grant

the year were made, *appropriating* certain sums to certain purposes; which act had, as Mr. Grey proved in numerous and very important instances, been most grossly violated. The money appropriated to clothing the army, for example, had never been so applied, and there was then due six hundred thousand pounds and upwards to the several colonels of regiments, &c. upon this account. It was very possible that exigencies might arise which would justify, in a certain degree, deviations from the Act of Appropriation, but in such cases the necessity ought to be stated to the house, and an indemnity granted. On the contrary, great pains had been taken to impose upon the house by false accounts, as appeared by reference to what is styled, in parliamentary language, the Disposition Paper—a document established at the Revolution, as a real account, for the information of parliament, how the supplies were employed. This paper he now arraigned as completely false. It stated that the sums voted for the army, &c. had been issued when that branch of the service was still in arrear.—The question before the house was, whether they would suffer this official statement to become a mere form, and the minister to apply the public money as he thought proper, in defiance of the solemn enactments of the legislature? In direct violation also of an act

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of parliament, the paymaster of the army was allowed to retain in his hands a very large balance of the public money, which ought to have been paid into the Bank.

Mr. Pitt's defence was very vague and general. "The Act of Appropriation had at no time (he said) been strictly adhered to; though he allowed that the recent deviations from it had been greater than formerly. It was no reproach to the Treasury not to be able to ascertain things in their nature inascertainable. Considering the variety of operations to which the views of ministers must be directed in a war like the present, and the necessary changes which must take place, it would ill accord with the public service to bind them down by the strict letter of the act. The balance in the hands of the paymaster was (he said) temporary and accidental, and owing to the refusal of the directors of the Bank to receive Exchequer-bills as cash, but they had since agreed to receive them."

Mr. Fox observed, that whoever had heard the defence set up, without adverting to the accusation, would have thought that the latter was directed against the incurring any extraordinaries at all; not that they had been incurred improvidently, or had been with-held improperly from the house; or, when incurred and provided for, that the money voted for them

not been applied to their discharge. Arguing generally, it was no doubt certain that, when necessity demanded, the Act of Appropriation must be dispensed with; and this sort of argument would apply to any other law, inevitable necessity being an answer to every thing. The great matter to be explained was, why were the sums voted by the house for extraordinary purposes not applied to their original destination?—That the money originally voted was applied necessarily to other purposes was no reason for delaying the payment one hour after the succeeding grant, which included and provided for all preceding deficiencies. The minister had answered this by the avowal of a system which tended to bring our finances into the greatest confusion—that new grants for old demands should be applied to the discharge of still newer demands: so that to the uncertainty of the appropriation of grants there would be no end. Without some alteration in this practice, neither the house of commons nor the public could ever know that money was applied to the purposes to which the law destined it.—Mr. Fox severely censured the infringement of the act relative to the office of paymaster. If the Bank refused Exchequer-bills, the money ought to have been issued some other way. If the Bank had not consented to the new arrangement, was the

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balance never to be paid as the act of parliament positively directed?" The previous question at length released the minister from one of the most disagreeable dilemmas he had ever found himself in; and the resolutions of Mr. Grey were virtually rejected by a vast majority of 171 voices.

Motion by the marquis of Lansdown for the appointment of a committee of finance.

Nearly at the same time the marquis of Lansdown, actuated by the same general views with Mr. Grey, moved the house of lords for the appointment of a committee to enquire into the state of the public expenditure. "Many reforms (his lordship said) had been clearly and ably pointed out in the reports of the commissioners of accounts nominated during the last war, which had been neglected by the present ministers; and the time would fail him should he enumerate all the abuses which had been introduced and sanctioned by them. He was tired of inspecting that register of corruption, *the* Red Book. But, above all other abuses and innovations, his lordship deprecated that which he said swallowed up the rest—*the power insidiously acquired by the minister of obtaining advances from the Bank to an unlimited amount.* By the most salutary regulation of the original act of king William, the bank was restricted within very narrow bounds. But this restraint had been repealed by a clause so artfully inserted

a late act of parliament, that had it not been for the vigilance of a noble lord then present (the earl of Lauderdale) it would have passed wholly unnoticed. In consequence of this repeal, the Bank might stretch their credit to government at pleasure; and the minister, without consent of parliament, had an ample resource within his reach. His lordship wished to have it thoroughly ascertained, whether, and how far, the public expenses had increased beyond the supplies annually granted by parliament?—After a warm debate, the motion was negatived by 104 to 12 voices only.

On the 10th of May an address to the king was moved in both houses—by the earl of Guildford in the upper, by Mr. Fox in the lower house of parliament—drawn in terms of remarkable vigor and ability. The address declared "that the duty incumbent upon parliament no longer permitted them to dissemble their deliberate opinion that the distress, difficulty, and peril, to which this country is now subjected, have arisen from the misconduct of the king's ministers, and are likely to subsist and increase as long as the same principles which have hitherto guided these ministers shall continue to prevail in the councils of Great Britain.—It is painful to us (say the supporters of this high-spirited address) to remind your majesty of the situation of

Address to the king moved by the earl of Guildford and Mr. Fox.

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your dominions at the beginning of the war, and of the high degree of prosperity to which the skill and industry of your majesty's subjects had, under the safeguard of a free constitution, raised the British empire, since it can only fill your mind with the melancholy recollection of prosperity abused, and of opportunities of securing permanent advantages wantonly rejected. Nor shall we presume to wound your majesty's benevolence, by dwelling on the fortunate consequences which might have arisen from the mediation of Great Britain between the powers then at war, which might have ensured the permanence of our prosperity while it preserved all Europe from the calamities which it has since endured,—a mediation which this kingdom was so well fitted to carry on with vigor and dignity, by its power, its character, and the nature of its government, happily removed at an equal distance from the contending extremes of licentiousness and tyranny.—From this neutral and impartial system of policy your majesty's ministers were induced to depart by certain measures of the French government, of which they complained as injurious and hostile to this country. With what justice those complaints were made we are not now called upon to determine, since it cannot be pretended that the measures of France were of such a nature as to preclude the

possibility of adjustment by negotiation; and it is impossible to deny that the power which shuts up the channel of accommodation must be the real aggressor in war. To reject negotiation is to determine on hostilities; and, whatever may have been the nature of the points in question between us and France, we cannot but pronounce the refusal of such an authorized communication with that country, as might have amicably terminated the dispute, to be the true and immediate cause of the rupture which followed. BOOK XXII. 1796.

"Nor can we forbear to remark that the pretences under which your majesty's ministers then haughtily refused such authorized communication have been sufficiently exposed by their own conduct in since submitting to a similar intercourse with the same government.

"The misguided policy which thus rendered the war inevitable appears to have actuated your majesty's ministers in their determination to continue it at all hazards. At the same time we cannot but observe that the obstinacy with which they have adhered to their desperate system is not more remarkable than their versatility in the pretexts upon which they have justified it. At one period the strength, at another the weakness, of the enemy, have been urged as motives for continuing the war; the successes as

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well as the defeats of the allies have contributed only to prolong the contest; and hope and despair have equally served to involve us still deeper in the horrors of war, and to entail upon us an endless train of calamities.

"After the original professed objects had been obtained by the expulsion of the French armies from the territories of Holland and the Austrian Netherlands, we find your majesty's ministers influenced either by arrogance or by infatuated ambition, and the vain hope of conquests which if realized, could never compensate to the nation for the blood and treasure by which they must be obtained, rejecting unheard the overture made by the Executive Council of France, at a period when circumstances were so eminently favorable to your majesty and your allies, that there is every reason to suppose that a negotiation commenced at such a juncture must have terminated in an honorable and advantageous peace: to the prospects arising from such an opportunity they preferred a blind and obstinate perseverance in a war which could scarce have any remaining object but the unjustifiable purpose of imposing upon France a government disapproved of by the inhabitants of that country; and such was the infatuation of these ministers, that, far from being able to frame a wise and comprehensive system of policy, they

rejected the few advantages that belonged to their own unfortunate scheme. The general existence of a design to interpose in the internal government was too manifest not to rouze into active hostility the national zeal of that people; but their particular projects were too equivocal to attract the confidence or procure the co-operation of those Frenchmen who were disaffected to the government of their country. The nature of these plans was too clear not to provoke formidable enemies, but their extent was too ambiguous to conciliate useful friends. BOOK XXII. 1796.

"We beg leave farther to represent to your majesty, that, at subsequent periods, your ministers have suffered the most favorable opportunities to escape of obtaining an honorable and advantageous pacification. They did not avail themselves, as it was their duty to have done, of the unbroken strength of the general confederacy which had been formed against France for the purpose of giving effect to overtures for negotiation. They saw the secession of several powerful states from that confederacy, they suffered it to dissolve without an effort for the attainment of a general pacification. They loaded their country with the odium of having engaged in a combination charged with the most questionable and unjustifiable views, without availing themselves of that combination for pro-

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curing favorable conditions of peace. That, from this fatal neglect, the progress of hostilities has only served to establish the evils which might certainly have been avoided by negotiation, but which are now confirmed by the events of the war. We have felt that the unjustifiable and impracticable attempt to establish royalty in France by force has only proved fatal to its unfortunat supporters. We have seen with regret the subjugation of Holland, and the aggrandisement the French republic; and we have to lament t alteration in the state of Europe, not only fr the successes of the French, but from the f midable acquisitions of some of the allied pow on the side of Poland—acquisitions alarm from their magnitude, but still more so from manner in which they have been made; fatally learning that the war has tended alon establish the very evils for the preventio which it was avowedly undertaken.

"On a review of so many instances of and flagrant misconduct, proceeding fron same pernicious principles, and directed wi corrigible obstinacy to the same mischi ends, we deem ourselves bound, in duty t majesty and to our constituents, to declar we see no rational hope of redeeming the of the kingdom, but by the adoption o stem radically and fundamentally differe

that which has produced our present calamities. BOOK XXII. 1796.

"Unless your majesty's ministers shall, from a real conviction of past errors, appear inclined to regulate their conduct upon such a system, we can neither give any credit to the sincerity of their professions of a wish for peace, nor repose any confidence in them for conducting a negotiation to a prosperous issue. Odious as they are to an enemy, who will still believe them secretly to cherish those unprincipled and chimerical projects which they have been compelled in public to disavow, contemptible in the eyes of all Europe from the display of insincerity which has marked their conduct, our only hopes rest on your majesty's royal wisdom and unquestioned affection for your people, that you will be graciously pleased to adopt maxims of policy more suitable to the circumstances of the times than those by which your majesty's ministers appear to have been governed, and to direct your servants to take measures which, by differing essentially, as well in their tendency as in the principle upon which they are founded, from those which have hitherto marked their conduct, may give this country some reasonable hope, at no very distant period, of the establishment of a peace suitable to the interests of Great Britain, and likely to preserve the tranquillity of Europe."

BOOK XXII. 1796. This admirable address excited very animated debates in both houses. Mr. Fox, in the course of a speech worthy of his great and unrivalled talents, enlarged much on that most fatal of all the innumerable errors of the present ministry—the refusal to mediate between France and Austria. "Had they (said he), counselled his majesty to accept of that grateful office, it would have added lustre to the national character. That was the period when Great Britain might have interfered with advantage, with decision, and effect. Her seasonable interposition would have secured the peace of Europe. But from the refusal of our good offices, the natural conclusion was, that, although England saw the growing discord, and had the means of preventing it, she thought proper, in preference to effecting so desirable a purpose, to become an accessary in the designs formed against France Mr. Fox then, adverting to the immediate and specific causes of the war, remarked, that from the moment lord Gower was recalled there was no way left to make any regular application to the French government. How could we expect the redress of any grievance from a government of which we did not even acknowledge the existence?—In allusion to the celebrated publication of Mr. Burke, that splendid effusion of genius and imagination, Mr. Fox said, that

ministry and the nation had been dazzled with the brilliancy of a fatal constellation, from which death and destruction had issued, and the world been desolated. This it was which had induced numbers to run headlong into the ruinous abyss of war and carnage. For his own part, he had, from the commencement of the war, advised the recognition of the new government of France, as the first and most essential step to be taken in order to effect the restoration of peace: and of the necessity of this measure it appeared that his majesty's ministers were at length convinced, though he feared that the men who had shewn themselves so incompetent to conduct with success the war into which they had plunged the nation, would be found no less inadequate to the task of concluding a safe and honorable peace."

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Mr. Pitt, in reply, insisted that his majesty could not have interposed his mediation without incurring the hazard of involving himself in a war with that power which should have refused his terms *. He again expatiated on the danger

* This is a strange and extravagant assertion. Did sir Robert Walpole incur the hazard of involving Great Britain in a war with the Emperor in 1735, in consequence of the offer at that period made by the maritime Powers to mediate between France and Austria, and which the Emperor then refused to accept? No; it was held by that wise statesman sufficient to declare, that Austria, in consequence of that refusal,

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arising to all Europe from the tremendous decree of the 19th November; and the insult offered to this country in particular, in the encouragement given to the seditious and treasonable addresses presented to the Convention, by whom the bearers of them were cherished, applauded, and caressed; and no apology had ever been made for this insolent conduct. While the negotiation was yet pending, war was declared by France: that country, therefore, and not England, was the aggressor. This nation had no alternative; and after a war of more than three years, a war approved and sanctioned by that house, by repeated votes and declarations, a war justifiable on every principle of morality, and essential to the very existence of our constitution, would the house now acknowledge themselves in a delusion? Would they submi to the humiliating degradation of falsely arraign

had no claim to the assistance of England; and to exact fro France a convention securing the neutrality of the Low Cou tries. If Austria, supposing the mediation of Great Brit offered and refused in the present instance, had proved alo competent to sustain a contest with France, England might h looked on, an unconcerned spectator. If, on the contrary, was most probable, Austria had found herself unequal to conflict, she would have been ultimately glad to embrace t terms of mediation which she originally refused, in the hope expectation of being sooner or later joined by England, as precisely exemplified in the war of 1735 above alluded to.

ing themselves, and of passing their own sentence? It was a war of which the necessity and policy were manifest; and if the country should at any time suffer a disastrous reverse of fortune, he would exhort them not to yield to a temporary pressure; but, on the contrary, to redouble their efforts, in order to surmount their difficulties, and finally to obtain safe and honorable conditions of peace. Nor, on the other hand, if successes were gained, should the prospect of gaining more and farther advantages be relinquished by a premature readiness to make peace. BOOK XXII. 1796.

In conclusion, the motions both of lord Guildford and Mr. Fox were negatived by prodigious majorities. The public business being now concluded, his majesty terminated the session (May 19, 1796) with a speech from the throne, filled with the highest compliments to both houses "for the uniform wisdom, temper, and firmness, which had appeared in all their proceedings since their first meeting in that place." And, on the following day, a proclamation was issued for their dissolution, and an end was happily put to the political existence of this still confiding, still confounded, parliament, which had so enormously, and with such blind and obstinate rashness, added to the pressure of the public burdens, and involved the nation in a Close of the session.

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contest the most ruinous, the most unjust, and the most unnecessary, in which it had ever been engaged since the foundation of the English monarchy.

Military operations, 1796.

In consequence of the total subjugation of Holland by the French armies, hostilities in that quarter were for the present altogether extinguished; but in other parts the war was carried on with increased and redoubled fury. The Austrian armies were now placed under the command of the archduke Charles, brother to the emperor, a young prince of great spirit and gallantry, and who was said to inherit no inconsiderable share of those military talents which had so eminently distinguished his illustrious ancestor, the great duke of Lorraine. The armistice expiring on the 31st of May, the operations of the campaign upon the Rhine began a successful attack on the part of the French upon the Austrian posts situated on the Sieg and the Lahn, streams which run in a westward direction into that great river, with a view opening the way to Mentz, the siege of which they once more meant to attempt. But the Austrians, assembling in great force, compelled the French to retreat and resume their former positions. A totally different plan was therefore adopted; and general Moreau, who commanded the army of the Rhine and Mo

feigning preparations for another and more serious attack, drew off his troops with the utmost secresy, and by forced marches arrived at Strasburg: and notwithstanding an accidental inundation which raised the waters of the Rhine to an uncommon height, he effected the passage of the river, and by a sudden and furious assault reduced the fortress of Kehl on the opposite bank. General Wurmser, who commanded in this quarter, unable to withstand the impetuosity of this irruption, immediately applied to the archduke for aid; and his imperial highness, sensible of the importance of checking early the progress of the French in the Brisgau, hastened in person with a large body of troops to his assistance. Before the arrival of this reinforcement, however, the Austrians had been worsted in various engagements, and the passes of the Black Forest forced in several parts. General Wurmser having at length formed a junction with the archduke, they took a very advantageous position in the vicinity of Ettlingen, where they waited the attack of the French; and on the 9th of July a most bloody battle was fought at this spot, with desperate valor on both sides. Fortune at last decided in favor of the republicans; and the Austrians, retreating with precipitation into the heart of Germany, left the

BOOK XXIII. fortresses of Mentz, Manheim, Philipsburg, and Ehrenbreitstein, to their natural defence.

1796. General Jourdain, who commanded the army of the Sambre and Meuse, having repassed the Lahn, was by this time before the gates of Frankfort; so that the French were now masters of the whole course of the Rhine, from the confines of Switzerland to the Westphalian frontier. General Moreau, after taking possession of Fribourg, the chief town in the Brisgau, and Stutgard, the capital of the duchy of Wirtemberg crossed the Necker, reducing the entire circle o Suabia to submission. Jourdain in the mea while marching through Frankfort, Aschaffer burg, and Wurtzbourg, all of which places su rendered almost to his first summons, foun himself in possession of the whole of Franconi the army of general Wartensleben, the success of Wurmser, every where retiring before hi A division of the army of the Rhine and Mosel under Ferinot, having at the other extremity the line seized upon the city of Constance, a the various fortresses on the Lake, the repu can armies formed an immense chain, of wl the left extended to the frontiers of Bohemia Saxony, and the right to the Tyrolian mc tains. In these circumstances the duke of V temberg and the margrave of Baden, bereft of t

March of the generals Moreau and Jourdain into the heart of Germany.

territories, sent ambassadors to the Directory to sue for peace, which was granted them on their engaging to withdraw from all alliances offensive and defensive into which they had entered against the republic, and to cede to France whatever territory they possessed, which was but of trivial account, on the left or French side of the Rhine. A new treaty of friendship and alliance was at the same time concluded with the king of Prussia, who, delighted to see the humiliation of the house of Austria, was occupied only with the thought how to convert the passing events of the war to his own advantage. With this view, and trusting to the connivance at least of the French, he detached a body of troops to seize upon the imperial city of Nuremburg, upon which he took this opportunity to advance some antiquated and frivolous claims. BOOK XXII. 1796.

As the French armies advanced into Germany, the inhabitants, who were at first much biassed in their favor, and strongly attached to the principles upon which the revolution had been originally founded, began to perceive that principles and practices were not necessarily connected, and that, in the present instance, they were far as the poles asunder. The contributions levied by the French generals for the support of their troops in the German principalities were so heavy as to make the Germans bitterly to

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regret the milder tyranny of their own petty despots; and the troops, flushed with the pride of victory, indulged in all manner of military license. The French government had never really or seriously entertained the design of establishing their dominion or influence on the eastern side of the Rhine, and since their connection with Prussia they were particularly careful not to alarm the court of Berlin by any projects of revolutionizing the empire. The bond of union between them was the desire of humbling the power of the Austrian house, which it was now, as at all other times, the true policy of Great Britain to support and strengthen. When the emperor indulged the wild ambition of aggrandizing himself at the expence of France, and of partitioning her provinces, it would indeed have been not only the highest wisdom, but the truest friendship, in the court of London, to have interposed her powerful and irresistible mediation to restrain these foolish and destructive projects. But circumstances were at present totally changed: France had now repelled her insolent invaders, but the empire was in danger of being attacked in his hereditary dominions; and France was now a nation whose vast preponderancy threatened the balance of power and the liberties of Europe. All the feelings which had been origin-

terested in her favor were now excited against her, and all impartial persons wished to see the armies of France in their turn compelled to abandon their conquests, and regarded the archduke with emotions of affection and admiration, as the glorious and patriotic defender of his native country.

The two invading armies continued their march without meeting any considerable resistance, till that of the Rhine and the Moselle, after taking possession of Ulm, Donawert, and other towns in the same direction, arrived, August the 24th, on the banks of the Lech, a large river running into the Danube, and which divides the circles of Suabia and Bavaria. Here a body of Austrians were posted near Augsburg, who disputed the passage very gallantly; but the high fortune of the French prevailed, and general Moreau, entering Bavaria in triumph, took possession of Munich on the 27th. In the mean time the archduke had directed his chief attention to the army of the Sambre and Meuse, under the command of general Jourdain; and while the army under Moreau yet remained on the Suabian side of the Lech, the Imperial commander, crossing the Danube at Ingolstadt with 25000 men, effected a junction with general Wartensleben, and suddenly with this very superior force attacked the van-division of the army of

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Jourdain, commanded by general Bernadotte, who, after an obstinate resistance, was compelled to fall back towards Nuremburg, not without sustaining very considerable loss. The two Imperial generals now threatened the main army of the French, and general Jourdain thought i necessary to make a retrograde movement t Amberg. He had no sooner taken this positio than he was assailed by general Wartensleben i front, and in flank by the archduke; and, aft a severe conflict, Jourdain was once more obli ed to retreat, with the loss of 7000 men and pieces of cannon. The French army took route of Sultzbach and Forcheim, and, in face of a victorious enemy, in the midst c country rendered universally hostile by the juries and the depredations they had sustai cut off from all communication with France minished in its numbers, and hopeless of ei ing the intended junction with Moreau, they now no option but to force their passage ba the Lahn. This was not accomplished wi extreme difficulty and very great loss. inhabitants of the countries through whicl had marched seized with eagerness the fav moment to retaliate upon the French which, loaded with the fruit of their rapine mure sedulous to escape with their spoils t incur any further risk of losing their treas

Defeat of Jourdain.

gether with their lives. The Austrian troops also hung on the rear and flanks of the French so closely, that no respite was allowed them; almost daily conflicts took place; nor did Jourdain think his army in safety, till, repassing Bamberg and Wurtzburg, he gained the banks of the Lower Rhine. In an action near Altenkerchen the French lost a most able officer in general Marceau, a young man whose gallant conduct and rising talents had excited the admiration of his generous adversary the archduke, who caused all military honors to be paid to his memory. By this retreat of the army of the Sambre and Meuse the situation of that of the Rhine and Moselle was rendered extremely critical, as the left flank of Moreau was left uncovered, and a part of the Austrian forces were falling into his rear, the Imperialists also steadily maintaining their position in front, while fresh battalions advanced on the side of the Tyrolese, seeming to threaten the surrounding him—insulated as he now was in the centre of Germany, and the garrisons of Mentz, Manheim, and Philipsburg, still remaining in the hands of the enemy. General Moreau nevertheless ventured to pass the Ihm, and even the Iser, in the hope that his farther advances to Vienna would incite the archduke to change his system of action, and enable Jourdain to resume the attack But

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Celebrated retreat of Moreau.

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finding that his imperial highness had joined, September 1st, the army of general Kray at Bamberg, and that the defeat of Jourdain was completed by the ill success of an engagement which took place between that city and Wurtzburg, on the 3d, he saw the necessity of concentrating his forces, in order to provide for his own safety. He immediately withdrew his troops in the best order from the electorate of Bavaria, and, repassing the Lech in the night of the 20th, encamped in a strong position between the city of Ulm and the Lake of Constance. Pressed both in front and rear, he determined to give battle to the enemy, and on the 2d of October he gained, at Stenhausen, near Biberach, a decisive victory over the Austrian general Latour, making no less than five thousand men prisoners. But this advantage was far from extricating him from the great and numerous dangers with which he was environed; since the archduke had succeeded in cutting off all communication with the Rhine, by seizing upon those passes in the Black Forest through which Moreau had to treat, and in gaining possession of the Vier Forestières, which lay on the Rhine, and which bounded the Swiss territory. An advanced body of Austrians, under the generals Nauendorf and Petrasch, lay in wait to attack the French in front; while general Latour,

strengthened by reinforcements, pursued them closely in the rear. At the entrance of the Black Forest the mountains rise so boldly, and the defile through which Moreau attempted to force a passage was so narrow, that scarcely could fifty men march abreast. Attacked as he was on all sides, he succeeded beyond all previous expectation and probability in repulsing the efforts of the enemy; and, in the face of the greatest dangers and most powerful opposition, he at length brought his army, without any material loss, to Fribourg, though a hostile country 300 miles in extent—making a most courageous and lion-like retreat, often turning upon his pursuers, defeating them in a variety of conflicts, and taking very many prisoners, colors, and cannon. 1796.

The winter drawing on, general Moreau abandoned the Brisgau, and passed the Rhine at Brisac and Huninguen, leaving a strong garrison in the fortress of Kehl, the trenches before which were opened by the archduke November 25. It was defended with heroic bravery by general Desaix, and was not reduced till the end of the year, the works being converted into an heap of ruins. Thus ended the expedition of the French into the imperial territory; and thus successful were the Austrians, under the gallant conduct of their young commander, in

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overthrowing the gigantic plans of conquest formed in the delirium of uninterrupted prosperity by an exasperated and formidable enemy.

The campaign in Italy this summer was still more interesting and important than that of Germany. During the three preceding years the French had attempted in vain to pierce through Piedmont into the interior of Italy. The immense barrier of mountains dividing that country from Savoy seemed to oppose an insurmountable obstacle to their progress. The republicans were indeed in possession of the coast from Nice to Genoa; but the passes into Lombardy were guarded with such care, that no apprehension seemed to be entertained by the court of Turin, with respect to the future. But in consequence of the magnificent plan of military operations formed this year by Carnot, formerly war-minister, and now a member of the Directory, great reinforcements were sent to the army of Italy, and the command of it entrusted to a young officer of the name of Bonaparte, a native of Corsica, whose extraordinary talents had upon divers recent occasions recommended him to the notice, and had obtained him the confidence, of that most discerning judge of military merit.

The first action of the Italian campaign took place near Savona, on the shores of the Medi-

terranean, in the vicinity of which the French general occupied a post at Voltri, sixteen leagues distant from Genoa. In this situation he was attacked (April 9, 1796) by the Austrian and Sardinian army under general Beaulieu, and driven back to his lines near Savona. Presuming on their success, the Austrians advanced rapidly, in the hope of cutting off the retreat of the French troops. General Bonaparte, foreseeing the probability of this sanguine pursuit, detached a body of troops under general Massena, who, taking advantage of the night, gained the rear of the Austrian army. General Beaulieu began the attack near Montenotte at break of day. The success was various, until the division under Massena appeared on the left flank and rear of the enemy. Astonished at this unexpected manœuvre, the Austrians were thrown into the utmost confusion, and fled the field with the loss of 3,500 men, of whom 2,000 were made prisoners. This victory was followed by another far more signal and decisive, near the village of Millesimo. General Bonaparte pushing forward to the banks of the Bormida, the Austrians, retreating to the passes of the mountains on the left of this river, halted at Millesimo, and fortified the defiles leading to it. These were assaulted April 11th, with great impetuosity, by general Augereau, and forced after a vigorous

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Wonderful successes of general Bonaparte in Italy.

Austrians defeated at Montenotte and at Millesimo.

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resistance. General Provera, with his division of 1,500 Austrian grenadiers, throwing himself into the ruins of an old castle, defended his post with such resolution for several days, that the Austrian army had leisure to rally, and take new positions. On the 17th of April a general engagement took place, and the generals Massena and La Harpe, passing the Bormida, surrounded the left wing of the Austrian army; a great slaughter ensued, and 8,000 men were made prisoners, with thirty-two pieces of cannon. General Provera was immediately obliged, with his brave division, to surrender themselves prisoners of war.

On the following day general Beaulieu surprized the French, reposing in full security after the fatigues of battle, at Dego, on the banks of the Bormida, but was nevertheless repulsed with considerable loss. The Piedmontese and Sardinian army now retreated with precipitation towards Turin, being successively driven from the posts of Ceva, Mondovi, and Cherasco. The French troops being within two days' march of that capital, his Sardinian majesty proposed a suspension of arms, which was agreed to on terms dictated by general Bonaparte. A definitive treaty was soon after concluded by the king of Sardinia with the French government at Paris, by which Savoy and Nice were ceded for

Armistice concluded with the king of Sardinia.

ever to the republic; the cities of Coni, Alessandria, and Tortona, delivered provisionally into their hands; and the fortresses of Suza and Brunetta, on the French frontier, were totally demolished, leaving the passage into Italy at all times open to the troops of the republic. The hard fortune of the king of Sardinia was the less to be lamented, as, by taking, unprovoked, an early and decided part with the enemies of France, this monarch had entirely departed from those rules of prudence which had in general marked the conduct of the princes of the house of Savoy, whose pride and policy it was to hold the balance of Italy between the two great powers of France and Austria. BOOK XXII. 1796.

The aristocracy of Venice, which, thinking itself hitherto little interested in the events of the war, had manifested an impolitic partiality to Austria, now perceived the necessity of bending before the genius of the Gallic democracy. The count de Provence, eldest brother of the late king of France, and who, since the death of the infant dauphin, had assumed the empty title of Louis XVIII. had resided for some time past in the city of Verona. This phantom of a king now received orders from the Venetian government to withdraw from their territories. On the delivery of the message he asserted his privilege as a Venetian nobleman; but offered to depart

Louis XVIII. compelled to quit the Venetian territory.

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on receiving the sword of Henry IV. presented by him to the republic, and on the farther condition of the erasure of his name from *the Golden Book*. The podesta replied, "that the latter, at his request, would be easily granted, but the sword of Henry IV. was retained as a pledge for a debt of 12 millions due from him to the republic."—After wandering about Europe for many months, this unfortunate prince found at last an asylum at Mittau in Courland, where, under the magnificent protection of the court of St. Petersburg, he was enabled to form a permanent establishment.

In consequence of the repeated disasters experienced by general Beaulieu, that commander determined to retire beyond the Po; and passing that river at Valenza, he labored assiduously to secure himself from the expected attack of the French at that post. General Bonaparte, marching along the southern bank of that river, reached Placentia early on the 7th of May, and effected his passage at that place in the course of the same day. Apprized of the approach of the Austrians, who moved along the northern bank of the Po, general Bonaparte encountered the vanguard of their army at Fombio, which was compelled to retreat with loss. Another body, coming up to the assistance of the first, was intercepted and repulsed by general La Harpe;

but this advantage was severely purchased by the death of this accomplished officer, who had in 1791, being then an inhabitant of the Pais-de-Vaud, been condemned to death by a judicial commission appointed by the magistracy of Berne, merely for the conspicuous part he had taken as a friend and advocate of the French revolution. General Berthier arrived in the interval, and pursued the enemy to Casal, of which he took possession. The dukes of Parma and Modena, on whose territory the French had entered, were now compelled to sue for peace, which was granted on the condition of paying ten millions of livres, and yielding up a certain number of paintings to adorn the national museum, now forming, at Paris.

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The Austrians defeated at Fombio had made good their retreat to Lodi, on the river Adda, where general Beaulieu had concentrated his forces. On the approach of the French they abandoned the town with so much haste that they had not time to destroy the bridge, which was however defended by a most formidable artillery; and the imperial troops were drawn up (May 10) in line of battle to oppose the passage. The major part of the French generals gave it as their opinion that an attempt to force the passage would be too hazardous; but general Bonaparte, apprehending that pernicious con-

Famous action at the bridge of Lodi.

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sequences might arise from a retreat, gave instant and peremptory orders for the assault. Before day-break a column of carabineers, followed by another of grenadiers, passed the bridge half way, when a general discharge of the Austrian artillery took place, and destroyed about 700 men. The column seemed to be struck with terror—when general Bonaparte in person appeared at their head, and, inspiring fresh courage by the enthusiasm of his example, they rushed forward with resistless impetuosity, amid the cries of "*Vive la République!*" breaking the Austrian line, seizing the batteries, and in a moment dissipating the Imperial troops, who were petrified with astonishment at the successful madness of the enterprize: and Bonaparte himself acknowledged, in his dispatches to the Directory, that of all the actions in which he had been engaged, none equalled the terrible passage of the Bridge of Lodi. While one part of the French army pursued Beaulieu towards Mantua, of which they formed the blockade, the rest entered Milan, the capital of Austrian Lombardy, on the 18th of May, the citadel nevertheless holding out for some weeks.

Amazed at the extent and rapidity of his own conquests, general Bonaparte, in a proclamation dated from Milan 1st Prairial, addressed

the army under his command in the language of triumph: "Soldiers!" he exclaimed, "you have precipitated yourselves like a torrent from the height of the Appenines: you have overthrown and dispersed all that dared to oppose your march: Milan is yours: and the republican standard is displayed throughout all Lombardy. Yes, soldiers, you have done much; but still more remains for you to do. Shall posterity reproach us with having found a Capua in Lombardy?—To re-establish the capitol; to replace there the statues of those heroes who have rendered it immortal; to arouse the Roman people, entranced in so many ages of slavery;—this shall be the fruit of your victories. It will be an epoch for the admiration of posterity!"—Such were the grand and romantic ideas which occupied the mind of this new Belisarius. In the mean time the dispersion of the Austrian army afforded him all the leisure requisite to carry on his various enterprizes against the respective states of Italy; and some insurrectionary movements in different parts were repressed with the most rigorous severity. The inhabitants of Pavia, reinforced by 5 or 6000 peasantry, shut the gates of that city, and compelled the French garrison, which had taken refuge in the castle, to surrender at discretion. Being at length attacked on all sides, and the gates

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forced, the French troops rushed forward amid every species of annoyance. "Three times," as general Bonaparte declares in his official account, "the order to set fire to the city expired on his lips." Nor was his lenity at last any just subject of boast; for though the city was spared, he inflicted a dreadful military vengeance on the members of the municipality.—A detachment of French troops took possession of Leghorn on the 28th of June, though belonging to a neutral power, on pretext of dislodging the English, the whole of whose property found there was confiscated to the republic. The factory, however, removed the greater part of their effects in time to the isle of Elba, near the Tuscan coast; and on the 10th of July an English squadron, under commodore Nelson, seized upon the town and fortress of Porto Ferrajo on that island, which surrendered without resistance to the British arms, though defended by a considerable garrison with 100 pieces of cannon mounted on the ramparts. This proved a safe and excellent asylum.

French take possession of Leghorn; likewise of Bologna, Urbino, and Ferrara.

The main army of French during these transactions entered the territory of the ecclesiastical state, and took possession of the cities of Bologna, Urbino, and Ferrara. Both the pope and the king of Naples now sued for an armistice, which was granted to his Sicilian majesty, with

The pope and the king of Naples sue for peace.

whom the French had no wish to be at variance, on the easy condition of withdrawing all assistance from the allied army. But the pope was obliged not merely to cede the towns in possession of the French, but the city and fortress of Ancona on the Adriatic; also to pay the sum of 21 millions of francs; and to deliver one hundred pictures, busts, statues, or vases, at the option of the commissioners who should be sent to Rome for that purpose, to be deposited as trophies of war, and ornaments of peace, in the national museum of France. BOOK XXII. 1796.

The court of Vienna, confounded and alarmed at the progress of the French in Italy, now conferred the chief command of all their forces in that country upon that brave and experienced officer marshal Wurmser, who, assembling the shattered remains of Beaulieu's army, and strengthening them with great reinforcements, crossed the Adige towards the end of July, and attacked the posts of Sala and Corona, which covered the city of Mantua, the blockade of which was immediately raised by the French, and not without considerable loss. The Austrians, emboldened by this success, made themselves masters of the immense magazines formed by the French near Brescia, and, by the skilful exertions of the new general, in a great mea-

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sure cut off the communication of the French army with the Milanese.

1796. The reigning pope, Pius VI. a man of warm passions, and totally devoid of political discernment or discretion, no sooner received the intelligence of these successes, than he sent his vice-legate to take possession of Ferrara, now evacuated by the French, notwithstanding the sage and friendly remonstrances of the chevalier Azara, the Spanish ambassador, a man of an highly-enlightened mind and excellent talents, who justly represented this step as a direct violation of the armistice between his holiness and the republic. The Ferrarese seemed by no means delighted in thus reverting to the papal dominion, and it was not without difficulty that they would permit the arms of the Roman government to be restored. General Bonaparte, seeing himself in danger of being surrounded, suddenly withdrew his troops from Verona and the banks of the Adige, and by a forced march regained possession of Brescia. He then collected his forces near the village of Castiglione, between the Lake of Garda and the city of Mantua, marshal Wurmser having likewise taken a position in the same vicinity. The two armies joined battle on the 5th of August with the most obstinate resolution. The conflict was re-

Battle of Castiglione.

newed on the next and several following days; but it terminated at length in the total defeat of the Austrians, who were obliged to repass the Adige with very great loss, leaving the country round Mantua in possession of the French, who again formed the blockade of that important place. One great cause of the loss of this battle was the defection of several brigades of Polish troops who served in the Imperial army, but who were afterwards formed into a legion, and entered into the service of the French republic. Upon this misfortune general Wurmser retreated to the passes of the Tyrol, whither he was followed by general Brune. And on the 4th of September the Austrians were again attacked in their entrenched camp of Mori, which they were compelled to abandon, with the city of Roveredo, where they had established their magazines, and take refuge in the strong post of Calliano, not far distant from the city of Trent. But in this almost impregnable position they were once more assailed by general Massena, who, after a long and obstinate conflict, defeated the Austrians, reducing them to the necessity of retiring, with the loss of 6000 men and 20 pieces of cannon, to the valley of the Brenta. General Buonaparte, instead of attempting the impracticable passes of the Tyrol, closely pursued the Austrians to the banks of the Brenta; and at Bassano,

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on that river, the Imperialists again suffered a total discomfiture; but by rapid and incessant marches general Wurmser, fighting his way through the enemy, succeeded in gaining the city of Mantua, into which he threw himself and the remnant of his wearied and shattered army.

General Wurmser takes refuge in Mantua.

Genoa, after repeated efforts to maintain her neutrality, was compelled to yield to the menaces of the French; and, by a convention signed October 9, agreed to shut up her ports against the English. Treaties of peace were formally ratified with Naples and Parma; but it was found difficult to conclude a final settlement with the pope, of whom very hard conditions were exacted. He was required to set at liberty all persons, whether French or natives, who were held in confinement on account of political opinions; to desist from all persecution on account of religious opinions; to abolish the tribunal of the Inquisition; to renounce all title to Avignon and the Venaissin; to pay 300,000 livres per month during the war; to leave Ferrara and Bologna, with their legations, to the disposal of the French; to concede various specified commercial advantages; and to give to all these conditions a prompt and unreserved assent. The pope held a congregation of cardinals to deliberate on the terms thus

offered, who unanimously agreed that they were subversive both of the rights of religion and sovereignty; and a rejection immediately followed. BOOK XXII. 1796.

At this period all Italy seemed to be heaving from its political basis. The government of Naples, to which such favorable conditions of peace had been recently granted, because it did not suit the views or interests of the French to carry their arms into that distant quarter, was known to be sunk to the lowest pitch of imbecility and depravity. The tyranny of papal Rome, consolidated by the ignorance and folly of successive ages, now manifestly tottered to its fall; and Lombardy, divided amidst a number of petty despots, catching the strong contagion of the revolutionary spirit, aspired to the rank and dignity of a free and independent nation. The whole country south of the Po, Genoa excepted, now in possession of the French, appointed delegates, to the number of one hundred, to meet in convention at the city of Modena; the ducal government being previously dissolved, and the duke of Modena himself, notwithstanding his armistice with France, having abandoned his territory, and virtually abdicated his sovereignty. The Convention met on the 16th of October, 1796, and immediately decreed that there should be a sincere and indissoluble union between the

Cispadane confederacy.

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four states of Bologna, Reggio, Modena, and Ferrara—the new federation taking, from its geographical situation, the name of the Cispadane Republic. And, with the approbation of the French general, a delegation was sent to Milan, styled by analogy the Transpadane Republic, in order to establish between the two powers the bands of political union and fraternity. In return, the administrators of the provisional government of Milan were permitted to send deputies to the general congress of the Cispadane Confederacy, now removed to Reggio, and which, about the end of the year, resolved themselves henceforth into a republic, one and indivisible, on the model of France.

In the mean time the emperor, anxious to the last degree for the fate of general Wurmser and the numerous garrison inclosed in the fortress of Mantua, ordered field-marshal Alvinzi, an officer of high reputation, and the third commander-in-chief of the Imperial forces in Italy during this campaign, to assemble an army on the borders of the Tyrol, descending thence in two grand divisions along the Adige and Piava to Verona, which was the head-quarters of the French army. Marshal Alvinzi, who commanded in person the latter division, having passed the Piava and Brenta, encountered the van of the French, conducted also in person by general

Bonaparte, who, after a sharp conflict, compelled his antagonist to repass the Brenta. But the Tyrol division having defeated the forces opposed to them under general Vaubois, it became necessary for Buonaparte to retreat, in order to defend the passes of the Adige. The Austrian general, now thinking the junction of the two divisions infallible, flattered himself with the sanguine hope of raising, in a short time, the blockade of Mantua; but general Bonaparte, discerning clearly the fatal consequences of such an event, resolved immediately to risk a general attack on the army of Alvinzi, which had again advanced as far as the Adige. Crossing therefore that river in the night of the 4th of November, the French general advanced early in the morning to the village of Arcole, through which he must necessarily force his passage in order to execute his plan. The village was strongly situated amid morasses and canals; and the bridge which led to it was defended with every effort of military skill and valor. For the whole day the contest was continued to the manifest disadvantage of the French, who lost in the attempt some of their best officers, and a very great number of men. At length a detachment of the French, taking a long circuit, carried the village by an impetuous assault in the rear, but the Austrians had previously withdrawn their

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Battle of Arcole.

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artillery and baggage. The way being now open, on the 6th of November, at day-break, the French commenced a general action: the centre of the Austrians soon gave way, but, the wings being secured by the strength of their position, no material impression could be made. In the night, general Bonaparte caused bridges to be thrown over the impracticable parts of the morass, and the next morning the battle was renewed with tenfold fury; but, by a series of skilful manœuvres, the French having turned the flanks of the Austrian army, and a corps placed in ambuscade falling upon their rear, a general confusion took place, and the Austrians fled on all sides, and a complete though bloody victory was gained. "Never (said general Bonaparte in his dispatches) was field of battle so valorously disputed as that of Arcole." The other division under general Davidovitch, which had obtained signal advantages over general Vaubois, and had advanced within a short distance of Mantua, were now obliged, by general Bonaparte, who joined Vaubois in person with reinforcements, to fall back with considerable loss into the mountains of the Tyrol. General Alvinzi now again repassed the Brenta, leaving Mantua to its fate; but the gallant veteran, Wurmser, continued to defend that important fortress with invincible pertinacity.

General Alvinzi retires beyond the Brenta.

Notwithstanding the unfortunate issue of Alvinzi's expedition, the pope did not seem the more inclined to accede to the terms of accommodation offered him. Previous to the battle of Arcole, general Bonaparte had written with his own hand (October 26) a letter to cardinal Mattei, archbishop of Ferrara, entreating him to repair to Rome, and prevail, if possible, upon his holiness to reflect upon the nature of his situation and the necessity of acting conformably to his true interest, and declaring that peace was the wish of the republic. At the end of six weeks an answer arrived from the cardinal, stating, "that his holiness, as sovereign pontiff and depositary on earth of the precepts promulgated by the Saviour of Mankind, had ever been solicitous for the preservation of harmony in the great family of Christians; that he had felt the extremest sorrow in seeing France delivered up to such wild excesses, and the children of the church plunging themselves into such horrible disorders; that the gentleness with which he had treated these wanderers from the fold of Christ was so far from having its due effect, that, blinded by the success of their arms, the French government had exacted from him the overthrow and total destruction of religion, the Gospel, and the church; that his holiness, after devoutly asking counsel of God, and recalling

Incredible obstinacy of the pope.

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to mind the example of the antient martyrs, was decided to try the chance of war." To give efficacy to this decision, extraordinary levies were ordered to be made in the ecclesiastical state. The papal army was likewise reinforced by a considerable corps of German troops, and count Colli appointed to the chief command. The warlike ardor of the pope seemed, however, to all but himself, more an object of ridicule than apprehension. Very many of his subjects awaited with impatience the arrival of the French legions; and the inhabitants of the imperial city of Rome, who had imbibed the prevailing revolutionary spirit, triumphed in the sanguine expectation of the restoration, after the lapse of so many ages, of the Roman republic, in all the fascination of its antient forms and titles.

The naval and miscellaneous events of the present campaign are yet to be related. Since the autumn of 1793, several posts had been maintained in the island of St. Domingo, with great difficulty, and at an immense expense of blood and treasure to Great Britain. In six months after the landing, it was computed that six thousand lives, including 130 officers, had been lost by that horrid pestilential disorder known by the name of the yellow-fever. The *gens de couleur*, and negroes, who possessed the whole power of the island, and had expelled or extin-

guished the white inhabitants, contenting themselves with the quiet enjoyment of the interior of the country, suffered the English to retain unmolested their fatal conquests on the coast. BOOK XXII. 1796.

In the month of May the island of St. Lucia was recovered by the exertions of general sir Ralph Abercrombie, not without a vigorous resistance on the part of the French garrison. The insurrections, also, excited chiefly by the insidious arts of the restless and enterprizing partizan, Victor Hugues, in the islands of Grenada, St. Vincent, &c. were finally quelled, after much bloodshed. Island of St. Lucia recovered.

About the same time the rising colonies of Demarary, Issequibo, and Berbice, in the province of Surinam, belonging to the Dutch, surrendered to general Whyte, accompanied by a small squadron detached from the fleet by admiral Laforey. Seventy merchant ships, richly laden with the produce of the country, were also captured by the English. And in the east the valuable islands of Amboyna and Banda, with their several dependencies, were reduced to the subjection of Britain by admiral Rainier, without the smallest attempt at resistance on the part of the Dutch governors.

A French squadron under admiral Richery, notwithstanding the great naval superiority of England, found means to succeed in an expedi-

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tion to Newfoundland, where they burnt and destroyed British property to a vast amount. On the other hand, the Dutch squadron equipped early in the spring, for the purpose of recapturing the colony of the Cape, under the command of Admiral Lucas, and which had sailed for greater security north about, arriving at length, after a safe but tedious voyage, in the month of August, at Saldannah-Bay, were attacked by admiral Elphinstone, who had been sent from England with a far superior force, in order to intercept them. The crews of the different vessels mutinying against their captains, and declaring themselves in the interest of the prince of Orange, insisted upon their being delivered up to the English, which the Dutch admiral was obliged to comply with. The squadron consisted of seven sail of ships of war of different magnitudes, from 66 to 26 guns, with a considerable number of troops on board.

Capture of a Dutch squadron at Saldanha-Bay.

In the month of October, the island of Corsica, the favourite conquest of the war, was evacuated by the English. Although, when the reign of Jacobinism was at the height, the Corsican nation appeared passively to acquiesce in the dominion of the king of Great Britain, no sooner was a regular government established in France than they shewed an extreme solicitude to be re-united to that country, and to shake off

Evacuation of Corsica by the English.

their new allegiance. The victories of Bonaparte carried to the height the popular enthusiasm. The viceroy, sir Gilbert Elliot, perceiving, in the course of a tour which he ventured to make into the interior of the island, not without personal hazard, the universal fermentation which prevailed, and dreading a sudden explosion—the Corsicans, now joined by a body of French under general Gentili, having assembled in great force—gave notice that he was preparing to withdraw his troops. At Bastia, and St. Fiorenzo, however, this was not done without some resistance and bloodshed: a great part of the magazines also fell into the hands of the enemy. Immediately the Corsicans, forming themselves into primary assemblies, sent a deputation to the French commissioners in Italy, formally to renounce the title of subjects of the king of England, and to renew their oaths as citizens of the French republic. Thus in a moment vanished this transient farce and phantom of royalty; and thus did the red republican cap of liberty supersede that egregious bauble, the crown of Corsica.

Ever since the unfortunate recall of lord Fitzwilliam from Ireland that kingdom had been in a state of lamentable distraction. Those who hesitated not to sport with the feelings, and tantalize the expectations, of four millions of people, were

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certainly bold statesmen. In the short space of eighteen months which had elapsed since that event, it was computed that no less than 6000 souls had been driven by the violence of political persecution from their several homes in the county of Armagh and its vicinity. A large proportion of these were not catholics, but protestants of the presbyterian persuasion, descended from the Scottish colonists originally planted in the north of Ireland by the provident policy of king James I.; and who having diffused themselves in great numbers throughout the province of Ulster, were justly accounted amongst the most industrious and civilized of its inhabitants. Hunted from their habitations like wild beasts, these wretched manufacturers, encumbered with the implements of their occupations, such at least as could be rescued from the general destruction, were seen wandering in search of an asylum beyond the Shannon. Laws they knew to be in force to punish any attempt to transplant their arts and skill to a more grateful country, but none to provide them food or shelter in their own. The barbarities inflicted upon the Moriscoes in Spain, or the Huguenots in France, do not furnish more direful or affecting scenes, nor was the government of a Strafford or a Tyrconnel, in the last century, clouded with deeper shades of cruelty than those which now

marked and characterized the administration of a Camden. Of this general and deplorable state of things the French, as may easily be imagined, demonstrated their eagerness to make all possible advantage. An armament had been for a long time preparing in the harbour of Brest, intended to cover a descent into that country; but, from various unavoidable causes of delay, it did not sail till the 10th of December. It consisted of no less than eighteen ships of the line and thirteen frigates, and was commanded by vice-admiral Bouvet, having under convoy a great fleet of transports, with 25,000 men on board, under the conduct of the celebrated general Hoche. Nothing but misfortunes attended this attempt, which the season of the year rendered very dangerous. On its first departure several of the ships of war were lost or materially damaged in the passage of the Raz; and a hard gale springing up, the commander-in-chief was separated from the body of the fleet, which cast anchor, in a very shattered state, in Bantry Bay. After waiting some days in vain for the arrival of general Hoche, who was the only person entrusted with the orders of government, the admiral determined to return to Brest, which he effected with great difficulty, one ship of the line and two frigates foundering at sea. Another ship of the line was driven on the coast, and a

Descent upon Ireland by general Hoche.

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frigate captured by the English. The only consolation remaining to the French was, that the project was frustrated not by the naval power of England, but by the dreadful hostility of storms and tempests. The most remarkable circumstance attending this projected invasion was the violently inimical disposition which manifested itself with respect to the invaders on the part of the inhabitants of Ireland, notwithstanding their present state of discontent, resentment, and supposed disaffection. The accounts published by the government, which were confirmed by many private letters, stated, that the disposition of the country where the troops had assembled was as favorable as possible; that the greatest loyalty had displayed itself throughout the kingdom; that the country people had furnished the troops with provisions, and all sorts of accommodation to facilitate their march; and that every demonstration had been given of the zeal and ardor of the nation to oppose the enemy in every place where it could be imagined a descent might be attempted. "During their march (says the lord-lieutenant in his official dispatches to the duke of Portland) the utmost attention was paid them by the inhabitants of the towns and villages through which they passed; so that in many places the meat provided by the com-

missioners was not consumed. The roads which had been rendered impassable by the snow were cleared by the peasantry." Doubtless these poor mistaken people thought, that, after such decisive expressions of their loyalty, in such critical circumstances, the government might deem its security not endangered by restoring them to the rights of subjects and of citizens;—but they were doomed, by terrible experience, at once to discover and to expiate their error.

Differences between France and America.

While France, by the success of her arms, was lessening the number of her enemies in Europe, she experienced great chagrin in finding her influence much on the decline in the United States of America. It was supposed that national honor, if not national gratitude, would have prevented the government of America from seizing the opportunity when the French republic was struggling for her very existence, to throw itself into the arms of her most potent enemy. It was therefore with equal surprize and indignation that the French government heard of the conclusion of the treaty negotiated by Mr. Jay—the spirit of which was so evidently in opposition to the treaties already existing between America and France, that it was generally imagined, on both sides of the Atlantic, an open breach between the two nations must have been the immediate consequence. For some time

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past, the conduct of the American administration towards the Gallic republic had been cold and distant; nor did the recall and disgrace of M. Genet, whose acts of personal disrespect to the president had induced the French government to make this solemn reparation, effect any change in its favor. A momentary gleam of reconciliation had been thrown across this shade of discontent by the arrival at Paris of the new ambassador from the American states, Mr. Monro—whose character was held in the highest estimation, and whose principles were known to be decidedly favorable to France. But the treaty concluded so soon afterwards with England taught the republic what confidence they ought to repose in a government with whom, as it was said, interest and avarice were perceived to be the predominant motives of action. The treaty was affirmed to discover a disposition altogether inimical to France, and the provisions of it to be wholly incompatible with the faintest idea of amity. By the treaty of 1778, still in force, the United States guarantied to France the possession of their West-India colonies;—by the treaty of 1795, they consented that even supplies of provision sent to those islands should be treated as illegal commerce. Still hopes were entertained that stipulations so hostile to the interests of France, so contrary to the spirit, not

merely of amity, but of neutrality, would not have been sanctioned by the American legislature. Notwithstanding the predominance of British influence in the senate, and the determined dislike of the president to the more recent conduct of France, there existed powerful reasons for the refusal of such ratification: and all France heard with indignation of the governmental act which finally confirmed the treaty, attended also with the aggravating circumstance, that, on the 7th of April (1796) a resolution passed the house of representatives, declaring the treaty in question "to be highly injurious to the interests of America, and that it was not expedient for that house to concur in passing the laws necessary to carry it into effect."— Yet, on the 30th of the same month, a vote of approval was carried, doubtless through the influence of the executive government, though by a small majority. The Directory, however, had the prudence to abtain from actual hostilities; but, regarding the Americans in the light of real, if not avowed, enemies, they made such depredations on their trade, under different pretexts, as almost amounted to a commercial war: and a directorial arrêt was issued, 14th of Messidor, 4th year, (July 3, 1796), expressly enjoining French ships of war to observe the same conduct towards the vessels of neutral nations as they had

BOOK XXII. hitherto suffered with impunity from the English.

1796. Toward the close of the summer Mr. Monro was recalled from his embassy, to the great additional dissatisfaction of the French government, which refused to receive his successor, Mr. Pinckney, in the same capacity:—and M. Adet, the French resident in Philadelphia, notified, November 23, to the American government, that the Directory had suspended him from the exercise of his functions. But this was not till Adet had charged the governing powers "with permitting, by a perfidious condescension, the English to violate the right which the United States ought for their own honor and interest to defend, and presenting to England a poniard to be used against the French republic, their ally, under the cloak of neutrality." The speech of the president to Congress, (December the 7th, 1796), seemed, on the other hand, to contain both a reflection and a menace in respect to France. After complaining of the extensive injuries suffered by the American Congress from the cruisers and agents of the French republic, and the alarming nature of the communications received from its minister, he expresses his hope "that a spirit of justice and candour on the part of that republic may *yet* eventually ensure success to his earnest endeavours for the preserva-

tion of peace; but in pursuing this course he would not forget what was due to the character of the American government and nation." Such was the state of things, when general Washington resigned his government in the spring of 1797; and, retiring to his paternal seat on the banks of the Potowmac, again resumed, after an illustrious display of public virtues and talents, the character and station of a private citizen. Whether, under the pressure of those perplexing embarrassments in which he was involved during the latter years of his administration, his conduct was perfectly correct, is a question respecting which it may be allowable to pause. But, to use his own words, "at all events he had the consolatory reflection that none could serve his country with purer intentions than he had done, or with a more disinterested zeal."

General Washington resigns his office.

On the 1st of March, 1796, a National Convention of the inhabitants of the Seven United Provinces was summoned to meet at the Hague, and a constitution established nearly upon the model of the French republic. One of the first acts of the new government was to declare war against England, which had long since authorized hostilities against Holland; and had, by this, deprived the Dutch of a great part of those possessions which it was pretended, by the most shallow of deceits, to be a chief object

Affairs of Holland.

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of the present war to protect and defend. The long series of wrongs sustained by the Batavian nation from Great Britain, were exposed with great bitterness and strength of language in the declaration published upon this occasion by the Dutch government. The revolution in this country had been conducted upon principles of equity and moderation which did great honor to the leaders of it. Excepting the grand-pensionary, M. Van Spiegel, who was imprisoned, no one was punished for his previous acts or opinions; nor was any disposition manifested to retaliate upon those who had been most deeply concerned in the severe prosecution of the patriots which took place after the ineffectual and unseasonable attempt of 1787. The conduct of the French government in relation to Holland was, upon the whole, candid and generous. The contributions exacted from the inhabitants were indeed heavy; but, considering the riches of the country, and the protection afforded them, could scarcely be regarded as excessive. The real wish of France was to attach the Dutch nation to her interests, as her friend and ally; and possessing all the power, and, if she chose to exercise them, all the rights of a conqueror, she adopted the wise policy of avoiding any considerable or direct interference in the interior administration of their government, rely-

ing securely upon the general disposition which existed in her favor, upon their contempt of the abdicated stadtholder, and their inexpressible detestation of England. The National Assembly of Batavia, by which appellation the Dutch convention chose to be distinguished, decreed, in imitation of that of France, the abolition of the national church, resolving henceforth to defray the expense of no form of worship, but allowing pensions or indemnities to those who might suffer by the present reform. Upon the whole, the policy of France respecting Holland at this period formed a striking contrast to that of Louis XIV. in the year 1672; and the military and other requisitions of the French were in the highest degree favorable, when compared with the extravagant demands of that merciless tyrant, which were such as to throw the republic into absolute despair, determining those who scorned to bow their necks to the yoke, to renounce the country of their fathers, and to transport themselves and their families across the mighty deep, to seek an asylum in the bosom of the Indian Ocean.

Proceedings of the French government.

Although on the first establishment of the new constitution of France, the persons who composed the executive government seemed inclined to favor the faction of the Jacobins, (the majority having been themselves originally of the Moun-

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tain party) conceiving it expedient to adopt measures of severity with respect to those concerned in the insurrection of Vendemaire, who were regarded as adverse to the Jacobins, it was soon apparent that the bulk of this dangerous faction would never peaceably acquiesce in the present, or indeed in any permanent, order of things. The major part of the Jacobins, who had been placed in offices immediately under the government, were gradually dismissed; the police and municipality of Paris, where they possessed a decided ascendency, underwent a severe scrutiny; the military force of that great city was reformed; and the alarm excited by these different measures was at length wrought up to purposes of vengeance, when their assemblies were dispersed by order of government, and their places of meeting shut up. For the space of six weeks, confused rumors prevailed of a projected insurrection of the Jacobins. On the evening of the 9th of May, 1796, considerable bodies of cavalry were stationed in the neighbourhood of the Luxembourg and the Tuilleries, by order of the Directory; and the Pont Neuf was strongly guarded. On the morning of the 10th, the guard of the Directory and the legislative bodies was tripled, the streets were patroled, and the gardens of the Luxembourg were shut. On the same day the Council of Five

Conspiracy of Floreal.

Hundred received a message from the Executive Directory, informing them that a horrible conspiracy was prepared to burst forth the following morning at break of day; that the design of the conspirators was to murder the Executive Directory, the members of the two councils, the constituted authorities of Paris, and to deliver up the city to pillage and massacre; and that the leading conspirators were actually seized. Among these persons were, Drouet, remarkable as the man who had arrested the king in his flight to Varennes; Laignelot, an ex-deputy of the National Convention, and a member of the infamous Committee of Safety; Charles, Ricard, and Babeuf, styling himself Gracchus Babeuf, once the associate of Marat of infamous memory, who had fallen under the virtuous dagger of a modern Judith; Rossignol, ex-general of La Vendée; Amar, a notorious terrorist, &c. were also of the number: but Vadier, Robert Lindet, and Pache, effected their escape. Judging from the papers transmitted by the Directory to the councils, none of the various conspiracies which had convulsed the republic was more daring than the present, or had been more completely organized. A national convention, committees of general and public safety, and a municipality of Paris, were to be immediately formed, and to administer in a revolutionary manner till the es-

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tablishment of the constitution of 1793. No doubt the aim of the Directory was to make the present conspiracy appear as black and atrocious as possible; and there is, indeed, reason to believe that the foundations of it were both deeply laid and widely extended, but the timely discovery of this plot occasioned the public alarm to subside almost as soon as it was excited. Babeuf, and divers of his accomplices, were tried by the high criminal court at Vendome, convicted, and put to death. Insurrections and disturbances in different parts of the country, excited by the Jacobins, were quickly suppressed—the authority of the new government being, as usual in such cases, more firmly established by this abortive attempt to subvert it. But the Jacobins and royalists throughout France joined in exclaiming against the tyranny of the Directory, and in representing this plot, popularly styled the Conspiracy of Floreal, as having no real existence.

The affairs of finance greatly occupied the attention of the French government at this period. The credit of the assignats had been so much depreciated as to render that paper altogether useless. An order was therefore made to sell the remainder of the national domains at a low valuation, for which a new paper fabrication, under the name of Mandats, was to be received in pay-

ment as money: but, owing to causes which foreigners are ill able to develope, this paper fell almost immediately to the same or even a greater degree of depreciation than the assignats. Recourse was then had to the expedient of a forced loan, the produce of which fell far short of expectation; and the sanguine hopes of the English minister were again excited by the heavy and repeated complaints of the Directory of the impoverished state of the public revenue:—but persons of deeper penetration were perfectly aware that the physical resources of such a country as France could never be really and truly exhausted, and that, under the government of able men, the political means could never be wanting of bringing those resources into action. BOOK XXII. 1796.

It being decreed, by an article of the new constitution, that no one should be disturbed in the exercise of religious worship, provided he conformed to the laws, the constitutional priests, who, during the Robespierrian tyranny, had been involved in one common proscription with those who refused the oaths to government, again took possession of the churches, though unendowed, under the authority of the different communes. Meanwhile, the nonjuring priests continued to exercise their profession, and found every where devotees who considered them as State of the Gallican church.

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the only sure guides in the road to salvation; and a great schism arose in France between the two sects of Catholics. The conforming clergy, desirous to preserve their reputation for religious orthodoxy, which they held to be perfectly consistent with an attachment to republicanism, had, so early as the spring of 1795, convened a kind of synod for the purpose of examining into the state of the desolated church, and to take measures for the re-establishment of the ecclesiastical discipline, and the restoration of public worship. The bishops who composed this synod, now reduced to the state of primitive episcopacy, published a circular letter addressed to the Faithful in Christ, and containing a declaration of principles little differing from those which had formed the creed of the Gallican church. The pope was admitted to be their visible head; and the whole of the doctrines taught by the Apostolic and Roman church, defined by the œcumenical councils, and explained by Bossuet, were adopted as the standard of the Catholic faith. In the government of the church, episcopacy was acknowledged to be of divine original, and the authority exercised by the hierarchy was consequently asserted to be of divine right. This authority they immediately exercised, by formally expelling from their communion such as they

adjudged to be unworthy of their profession, or to have incurred in any mode the guilt of apostasy during the late period of persecution; amongst whom they reckoned those who had renounced their functions, or had contracted marriage. But the offence which most excited their indignation was what they were pleased to style the crime of LAICISM, which they defined to be the usurpation of priestly offices, declaring it to participate of the double character of error and sacrilege. The laymen, who were the objects of this priestly anathema, were those who presided at the religious assemblies of the people, where no ecclesiastic was to be found—a practice, during the violence of the Robespierrian persecution, by no means uncommon in France. Possessing not the shadow of temporal power, or the remotest prospect of acquiring it, this humble-minded synod declared, in a second letter or address published at the close of the year, their authority to be merely spiritual. After denouncing their censures and anathemas, they avowed the distinctive characteristic of Christianity to be charity! Reluctant to acknowledge any jurisdiction superior to their own, they affirmed that the bishop of Rome was first in dignity only, and not in power; and the storm of persecution having yet scarcely ceased, they inculcated the principle of toleration with great earn-

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estness. Upon the whole, though there is no reason to doubt but that this self-created synod might comprehend in it many virtuous and respectable individuals, the spirit of priestly domination, alike in all ages, in all countries, and under all circumstances, appeared extremely conspicuous in all its proceedings; and the assembly being again convoked at Versailles, in the month of March in the following year (1796), were immediately dispersed by an order from the executive power. In all other respects, the new government maintained a wise neutrality between the contending parties, and appeared to concern itself little or nothing in the contest.

National institute established.

Under the auspices of the Directory, a grand literary and scientific association, bearing the appellation of the National Institute, was at this period founded in France. At their first public meeting, April 4, 1796, in the great hall of the Louvre, the president of the Directory made a speech, in which he declared it to be the stedfast purpose of the government to revive the drooping arts, and to shield both learning and liberty from all the attacks of ferocious anarchy. More than fifteen hundred spectators were present on this solemn occasion, who testified their joy by the loudest acclamation. Desaulx, president of the Institute, replied, "that every member of that society felt the most ardent desire to con-

cur in advancing the prosperity of the republican government, and would aim, in giving lustre to their own names, to add splendor to that of their country;—that the republic of letters existed before the other, and its spirit could neither be enfeebled nor subdued; and that, amidst those whom it animated, the love of glory would ever be the support of liberty." During the recital of this speech, every heart swelled with emotion, every eye melted in tears, at the sad recollection of the past, combined with the soothing hopes of the future; and the magnificence of the spectacle suggested the interesting idea of a great nation rising, in a manner worthy of itself, from that abyss of calamity in which she had been so long lost and overwhelmed. BOOK XXII. 1796.

In the spring of this year, the Directory sent over commissioners to investigate the state of the island of St. Domingo, according to whose report, towards the end of the summer, the desolation which had overspread this colony, during five years of massacre and anarchy, had now ceased, and perfect tranquillity was at length restored. By other concomitant accounts, however, it appeared that this tranquillity had been obtained by the almost total extirpation of the white inhabitants, who, unfortunately for themselves, had refused to submit to the famous decree of emancipation, passed the 16th Pluviose, State of St. Domingo.

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in the second year of the republic (February 5, 1794). The negroes and *gens de couleur* were in actual possession of all the power and all the property of the island; and the tyranny so justly complained of, formerly in the planter, was now more inhumanly exercised by the slave, who, set loose at once from all restraint, felt a savage thirst for vengeance, which he gratified without control. Such was the fate of this fine country, once one of the principal sources of the wealth of France; but which precipitate humanity, mistaking the means for the end, and avaricious cruelty, opposing every alleviation of human misery, had nearly succeeded in bringing to utter ruin. The French government deemed it expedient to acquiesce in a state of things, which, in present circumstances, they could not redress. The island was effectually defended by its present possessors from the invasion of the English, destructive only to themselves: and as they at the same time acknowledged, though in vague terms, the authority of the republic, hopes were no doubt entertained that such a dependency upon France might be eventually preserved as would answer the commercial purposes, with a view to which this great and flourishing colony was founded; although many conceived that this extraordinary state of things would more probably terminate in the establishment of a

great mulatto republic in the noblest island of the Western Ocean. BOOK XXII.

The English government having promulgated at this period a declaration, allowing the exportation of goods to the Netherlands and the United Provinces, decrees were published by the two governments of France and Holland, prohibiting, under severe penalties, the importation of English goods into the territories of the two republics. The Dutch in particular declared "this precarious favor to be the fruit of perfidy, and an insult which ought to be rejected with indignation." But such essential inconveniences resulted to themselves from this prohibition, that it was either silently evaded, or fell gradually into neglect and disuse, and Great Britain still supplied, either mediately or immediately, all Europe with the product of her immense commerce and industry. 1796.

In the month of August (1796) a most singular political phænomenon presented itself in the Treaty of Alliance, offensive and defensive, concluded between the crown of Spain and the republic of France; and which, however incongruous such a connection might at first view seem, was really founded on principles of sound policy. France obtained commercial emolument, and Spain civil and political security. The two contracting powers mutually guarantied Alliance between France and Spain.

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each other's possessions; and either power engaged, in case of attack, to furnish the other with large succours by sea and land, to be at the disposal of the requiring power. The treaty was prospective merely, and to take place at the end of the present war, with the exception of England only—that being declared the only power against which Spain had direct grievances: and that his Catholic majesty should remain neuter with respect to the other powers armed against the republic. This was the certain prelude to a declaration of war on the part of Spain against Great Britain, which took place in a few weeks, the manifesto of the king of Spain bearing date October the 5th. The causes of offence enumerated in this declaration, framed under the over-ruling influence of France, are, for the most part, when considered as incitements to war, very frivolous; but they served to prove that Spain, as well as all the other maritime states of Europe, felt the greatest jealousy and resentment at the manner in which Great Britain had exercised her naval superiority. "By these insults (says the Catholic king), equally deep and unparalleled, that nation has proved to the universe that she recognizes no other laws than the aggrandizement of her commerce; and by her despotism, which has exhausted my patience and moderation, she has forced me, as well to

War declared by Spain against Great Britain.

support the honor of my crown as to protect my people against her attacks, to declare war against the king of England, his kingdom, and *vassals*." BOOK XXII. 1796.

A remarkably able, and spirited answer to this manifesto immediately appeared on the part of Great Britain, in which it is affirmed that the only difficulty of refutation arises not from the strength and importance of the complaints alleged, but from their weakness and futility, from the confused and unintelligible shape in which they are brought forward, and from the impossibility of referring them to any established principle or rule of justice. It stigmatizes the declaration of war on the part of Spain as a rash and perfidious step, which it disdainfully attributes not to any real enmity against Great Britain, not to any resentment of past or apprehension of future injuries, but a blind subserviency to the views of his majesty's enemies, to a dominion usurped over her councils and actions, compelling her to engage in a quarrel, and to contend in support of interests not her own.

Injudicious attempt of the court of London to negotiate with France.

A very important transaction of the present year, comprehended under the general miscellaneous branch of arrangement, remains to be narrated. The English cabinet, in the beginning of March, had commissioned its ambassador to the Helvetic States, Mr. Wickham, to

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enquire of the government of France, through the medium of M. Barthélemi, who had negotiated, and was still negotiating, divers treaties of peace at Basle, concerning its disposition to enter into a negotiation with his majesty and his allies; at the same time signifying that he was not authorized to enter into any discussion upon the subject of his note. M. Barthelemi was in a short time instructed to answer, "that the executive government of France ardently desired to procure for the republic a just, honorable, and solid peace;" but it is intimated that an indispensable condition of it was the retaining possession of those conquests which had actually been annexed to the territory of the republic. "The Constitutional Act (says the official note of M. Barthelemi) does not permit the Directory to consent to any alienation of that which, according to the existing laws, constitutes the territory of the republic." Offence was taken, notwithstanding the acceptance of the overture of England, at the secret and insidious mode in which it was made. "The step taken by Mr. Wickham (says M. Barthelemi) would have afforded to the Directory a real satisfaction, if the declaration itself, of his not having any order to negotiate, did not give room to doubt of the sincerity of the pacific intentions of his court. Is it that this step had had no other object than

to obtain for the British government the favorable impression which always accompanies the first overtures for peace? May it not have been accompanied with the hope that they would produce no effect?"—Although the overture of the English court was extremely cold and distant, as the government of France did not in the first instance reject it, the impolicy, not to say the injustice, of such a construction, was manifest: and if the English minister was really insincere, the conduct of the Directory furnished as plausible a pretext as could be wished for desisting from their pretended purpose. No sooner was the answer to Mr. Wickham's note received by the court of London, than a Declaration was published, containing a most acrimonious comment upon the principles comprized in it. "This court (says the Declaration) has seen with regret how far the tone and spirit of that answer, the nature and extent of the demands which it contains, and the manner of announcing them, are remote from any disposition for peace. The inadmissible pretension is there avowed of appropriating to France all that the laws actually existing there, may have comprized under the denomination of French territory. To a demand such as this is added an express declaration, that no proposal contrary to it will be made or even listened to; and even this, under

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the pretence of an internal regulation, the provisions of which are wholly foreign to all other nations. While these dispositions shall be persisted in, nothing is left for the king but to prosecute a war equally just and necessary." All this is doubtless very plausible, and it bears the evident stamp and impression of a minister who has been characteristically described as "possessing every talent for the conduct of great affairs, consistent with cunning." But the whole procedure is, notwithstanding, destitute of the real and essential marks of political sagacity and ability.

For, *first*, if it were the sincere intention and desire of the government of Great Britain to re-establish the relations of peace and amity with that of France, why should the ministers of England hesitate, in the first instance, to recognize the republic by name? whereas that obnoxious term was carefully and insultingly avoided in the official note of Mr. Wickham. And, *secondly*, why shun a direct application to the French government, stating their own sincere desire of peace, on honorable terms, by an agent or ambassador authorized to enter upon the discussion? The Directory, however, acted fairly and openly in the avowal that no territory, united, by the Constitutional Act, to France, would be relinquished by any subse-

quent treaty. The reason assigned for this determination might, with so captious an enemy as the court of London, have been better omitted; though, when such a resolution was once formed, it signified little to the adversaries of France upon what basis it rested. The annexation of the provinces in question to the republic was a reason valid only to themselves; and the notification of it to England indicated merely that the resolution was considered by the Directory as irreversible. In reply to this reasoning, it was undoubtedly sufficient for England to say, that the same power which united could disunite, and that the restoration of these provinces could not be, politically speaking, impracticable. But it was altogether idle and superfluous to enter into the investigation of an abstract question. France declared herself irrevocably determined not to relinquish certain of her conquests, amongst which, by far the most important in the view of England, were the Austrian Low Countries. It was for England to consider whether it were more eligible to continue the war, or to accede with a good grace to this unpleasant basis of pacification. To enter into an argument respecting an abstract politico-metaphysic right, and especially to urge it acrimoniously and reproachfully, could tend only to counteract and destroy that

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spirit of conciliation upon which the success of any future negotiation must in a great degree depend. Had the fortune of the war proved favorable to England, and France had demanded the restoration of Corsica, no doubt the court of London would have replied in the language used by the Directory, that this restitution could not be complied with, for that Corsica had been *annexed* to the imperial crown of Great Britain. Had the Directory exclaimed against the absurdity and arrogance of this answer, it might properly have been softened and explained, by saying, that, undoubtedly, the annexation of Corsica to the British crown did not, politically speaking, preclude its restoration by treaty to France, but that the act of annexation merely indicated the determination of the court of London never to relinquish this conquest. When great statesmen differ, it is always about things really important, and never about mere words or forms of expression.

Upon the whole, this overture, thus injudiciously and unsuccessfully made, left an unfavourable impression upon the minds of the French government and nation, which had been greatly embittered against England by many preceding events. Although the war had first broken out with Austria and Prussia, it was generally believed in France that the English

cabinet had secretly fomented that quarrel, of which, in a short time, it became the grand and almost only support. Regarding England, therefore, as the source of all their calamities, the French could scarcely look towards that country without passionate resentment for the desolation and horrors of which it had been the cause, and which the British ministry still appeared desirous to perpetuate.—Such was the state of things, when the court of London, alarmed at the critical situation of its ally the emperor, and the growing unpopularity of the war at home, made another attempt, either real or pretended, to effect a pacification with France.

Second attempt of the court of London to negotiate with France.

On the 6th of September lord Grenville addressed a note to count Wedel-Jarlsberg, the Danish ambassador at London, requesting that he would transmit, through the medium of his Danish Majesty's resident at Paris, to the Executive Directory, the declaration inclosed, purporting "his Britannic majesty's desire to conclude a peace on just and honorable conditions, and demanding the necessary passports for a person of confidence whom his majesty would send to Paris with a commission to discuss with the government there all the measures the most proper to produce so desirable an end." Had this been the mode of communication originally

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adopted, it would, no doubt, have proved acceptable: but, in the present temper of the Directory, the reply made—to use the expression of M. Kœnneman, the Danish resident, 'in a very dry tone'—was "that the Executive Government would not receive or answer any overture from the enemies of the republic transmitted through any intermediate channel; but that, if England would send persons furnished with full powers and official papers, they might, upon the frontier, demand the passports necessary for proceeding to Paris." The haughty demeanor of the court of London, was, however, by this time, so much lowered, that, in compliance with the requisition of the Directory, passports were applied for in the manner and form specified; but, at the same time, with the worst grace imaginable: for Lord Grenville, in the note addressed by him to the minister for foreign affairs, tells the Directory, "that the king, persevering in the same sentiments which he has already so unequivocally declared, will not leave to his enemies the smallest pretext for eluding a discussion, the result of which will necessarily serve either to produce the happiness of so many nations, or at least to render evident the views and dispositions of those who oppose themselves to it." The French minister, M. De La Croix, in his reply, passing over the rude ex-

pressions and ruder insinuations of this declaration without notice, contented himself with informing his lordship of the earnest desire of the French government to profit of the overture made to them, and assuring him of his personal wishes for the success of the negotiation." The passports in question were by the positive order and limitation of the Directory granted expressly " to the envoy of England, who shall be furnished with *full powers* not only for preparing and negotiating the peace between the French republic and that power, *but for concluding it definitively* between them." Lord Malmesbury, who had been engaged, under the name of Sir James Harris, in various negotiations of importance at Madrid, St. Petersburg, and elsewhere, and had acquired considerable reputation for diplomatic abilities, was nominated by his Britannic majesty to this important mission: and, on the 22d of October, his lordship announced to M. de la Croix his arrival at Paris, as " plenipotentiary to the FRENCH REPUBLIC." Notwithstanding the coldness and reserve which marked the first acceptance of the English overtures, the natural and characteristic politeness of the French nation prevailed, and lord Malmesbury met personally with a most courteous reception.

Lord Malmesbury nominated ambassador to Paris.

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On the 24th of October a memorial was presented by the British ambassador, stating, "that, in the opinion of his Britannic majesty, the principle of compensation would best serve as a basis for the definitive arrangements of peace. Great Britain (says this boasting memorial), from the uninterrupted success of her naval war, finds herself in a situation to have no restitution to demand of France; from which on the contrary she has taken establishments and colonies of the highest importance, and of value almost incalculable. But, on the other hand, France has made, on the continent of Europe, conquests to which his majesty can be the less indifferent, as the most important interests of his people, and the most sacred engagements of his crown, are essentially implicated therein. The magnanimity of the king, his inviolable good faith, and his desire to restore repose to so many nations, induced him to consider this situation of affairs as affording the means of procuring for all the belligerent powers just and equitable terms of peace, and such as are calculated to ensure for the time to come the general tranquillity. It is on this footing then that he purposes to negotiate, by offering to make compensation to France, by proportionable restitutions, for those arrangements to which she will be called upon

to consent, in order to satisfy the just demands of the king's allies, and to preserve the political balance of Europe." BOOK XXII. 1796.

To this overture, the Executive Directory, through the medium of M. de la Croix, returned a very embarrassing answer. They observed, "that if lord Malmesbury would have agreed to treat separately, as he was formally authorized by the tenor of his credentials, the negotiations might have been considerably abridged; that the necessity of balancing with the interests of the two powers those of the allies of Great Britain multiplies the combinations, increases the difficulties, tends to the formation of a congress, the forms of which it is known are always tardy, and requires the accession of powers which hitherto have displayed no desire of accommodation, and have not given to lord Malmesbury himself, according to his own declaration, any power to stipulate for them. Nevertheless the Executive Directory, animated with an ardent desire of putting a stop to the scourge of war, and to prove that they will not reject any means of reconciliation, declares that, as soon as lord Malmesbury shall exhibit to the minister for foreign affairs sufficient powers from the allies of Great Britain for stipulating for their respective interests, accompanied by a promise on their part to subscribe to whatever shall be concluded

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in their names, the Executive Directory will hasten to give an answer to the specific propositions which shall be submitted to them, and that the difficulties shall be removed, as far as may be consistent with the safety and dignity of the French republic."

The Directory appears to have imagined, certainly not without reason, that the court of London had no serious intention of acceding to the basis of pacification stated by M. Barthelemi to Mr. Wickham; and, in their reply to the memorial of lord Malmesbury, they plainly indicated their suspicions "that the British government had a double object in view—to prevent by general propositions the partial propositions of other powers, and to obtain from the people of England the means of continuing the war by throwing an odium upon the republic;" and they declared without reserve "that they could not but perceive that the proposition of lord Malmesbury is nothing more than a renewal, under more amicable forms, of the former proposal of Mr. Wickham."

Lord Malmesbury, perplexed and confounded by this answer, wrote to his court for fresh instructions: and on the 12th of November he transmitted a second note or memorial to the Directory, in which, agreeably to the orders received during the interval, his lordship de-

clared, " that, with regard to the offensive and injurious insinuations contained *in that paper**, the king has deemed it far beneath his dignity to permit an answer to be made to them on his part in any manner whatsoever.—As to the difficulty started by the Directory, it is justly said that there could be no question but of a negotiation which shall combine the interests and pretensions of all the powers who make a common cause with the king in the present war. In the course of such a negotiation, the intervention, or at least the participation, of these powers will doubtless become absolutely necessary;—but it appears that the waiting for a formal and definitive authority on the part of the allies of the king, before Great Britain and France begin to discuss even provisionally the principles of the negotiation, would be to create a very useless delay."—On the very same day, M. de la Croix, in a note to lord Malmesbury, declared himself " charged by the Executive Directory to invite him to point out, without the smallest delay, and expressly, the objects of reciprocal compensation which he had to propose." To which lord Malmesbury replied, " that, before the formal acceptation of this

* Could the court of London have given " full scope to its greatness" on this occasion, the phraseology of the note would no doubt have been " that audacious paper."

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principle, or the proposal on the part of the Executive Directory of some other principle which might equally serve as the basis of a negotiation for a general peace, he could not be authorized to designate the objects of reciprocal compensation."

After some smart altercation, calculated for no good purpose, lord Malmesbury was informed by M. de la Croix, November 27, "that the proposal contained in his note of the 12th of November involved in it an acknowledgment of the principle of compensation; and that principle being now formally recognized, he was again invited to give a speedy and categorical answer to the proposal." But it now appeared that Lord Malmesbury came totally unfurnished with any plan or *projet* of peace. To the astonishment of the Directory, the ambassador who had been expressly required to bring with him full powers to conclude a peace definitively with the republic was obliged again to consult his court, and the negotiation was totally at a stand till the 17th December, when lord Malmesbury stated, in a formal and confidential memorial, the terms agreeably to which it was conceived that a treaty might be concluded on the basis of mutual compensation. These terms imported, 1st, that France should restore all her conquests made in any of the dominions of the emperor or

in Italy, and that Great Britain should render back all her acquisitions gained from that power in the East and West Indies. BOOK XXII. 1796.

The 2d article of the *projet* nevertheless stipulated for "the re-establishment of peace between the Germanic empire and France by a suitable arrangement, conformable to the respective interests and general safety of Europe." So that the German princes on the frontier, whose violated rights formed one principal ground or pretext for this destructive war, were in fact to compensate by territorial sacrifices on their part for the complete restitution to be made, agreeably to the 1st article of the *projet*, to the emperor. Such was the nature of the British and Imperial protection.

The *projet* proceeds to state "that if, in addition to the entire restitution of the French colonies by Great Britain, his majesty were to wave the right given him, by the express stipulations of the treaty of Utrecht, of opposing the cession of the Spanish part of St. Domingo to France, his majesty would then demand, in return for this concession, a compensation which might secure, at least in some degree, the maintenance of the balance of the respective possessions in that part of the world." But it seemed to involve a gross absurdity, in a time of open war, to make any mention of the stipulations of a

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treaty of peace. The article of the treaty of Utrecht referred to, authorized, it is true, Great Britain to prevent even by force of arms the transfer of any of the Spanish colonies in the West Indies to France, even supposing she had no other cause of complaint or quarrel. But when she was actually at war with those powers, all previous stipulations and arrangements were necessarily and wholly superseded; and the consent of Great Britain to a cession which it was not in her power to prevent, must be a matter of perfect indifference, if not rather of contempt and ridicule; at best a matter of mere form, for which nothing ought to be asked, because nothing of value was conceded. "Restitutions of any kind in favor of Holland, unless France would on her part re-instate that republic in all respects in the same political situation in which it stood before the war (lord Malmesbury expressly declares, in a second memorial delivered at the same time), could be admitted in so far only as they shall be compensated by arrangements calculated to contribute to the security of the Austrian Netherlands!"

On the subject of these memorials lord Malmesbury had a long conference with M. de la Croix, of which his lordship transmitted a very curious and minute account to his own court. The following are the most important

particulars.—After perusing the memorials with great attention, the French minister said "that the plan of pacification proposed appeared to him to be liable to insurmountable objections, as requiring much more than it conceded, and, in the event, not leaving France in a situation of proportional greatness to the other powers of Europe. He said, the act of their constitution made it impossible for the republic to do what we required. The Austrian Netherlands were annexed to it: they could not be disposed of without flinging the nation into all the confusion which must follow a convocation of the primary assemblies; and that he was surprized at the demand, since he had in some of the late conversations fully explained the nature of their constitution."—Lord Malmesbury, in return, forcibly urged "that there existed a *droit publique* in Europe paramount to any *droit publique* they might think proper to establish within their own dominions; and that an obligation, at least equally binding, and equally public, existed between the king and the emperor, obliging them not to lay down their arms without the restitution of all the territories belonging to either before the war: that, in case of necessity arising from losses and misfortunes, the *power* of cession must inhere in the executive government; and, if in that case, it equally existed in all others."

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M. de la Croix finding himself perplexed in the attempt to confute these reasonings, changed his ground, and maintained, "that, from the relative situation of the adjacent countries, the present government of France would be reprehensible in the extreme, and deserve impeachment, if they ever suffered the Netherlands to be separated from their dominions*: that, by the partition of Poland,—Russia, Austria, and Prussia, had increased their power to a most formidable degree; that England, by its conquests, and by the activity and judgment with which it governed its colonies, had redoubled its strength.—Your Indian empire alone (said M. de la Croix with vehemence) has enabled you to subsidize all the powers of Europe

* In reading the account of this conference, it must never be forgotten that the Englishman and not the Frenchman is the narrator; and that it depends upon the art of the sculptor, whether the lion shall be represented as killing the man, or the man as killing the lion. It appears that M. de la Croix did not pretend to deny that the power of restitution was, in a political sense, inherent in the nation; but merely that it could not constitutionally be exercised by the Directory. In reply to lord Malmesbury's hypothetical case of necessity, M. de la Croix might *perhaps* think it sufficient to say, that necessity is a valid plea for any thing, but that no such necessity was acknowledged; and that if, *in the existing circumstances*, the Directory made the restitution in question, they would deserve impeachment:—and surely the French government had a right to its *sine qua non* as well as the English.

against us, and your monopoly of trade has put you in possession of a fund of inexhaustible wealth." The French minister farther asserted, "that Belgium, by belonging to France, would remove what had been the source of all wars for two centuries past; and the Rhine, being the natural boundary of France, would ensure the tranquillity of Europe for two centuries to come." He at length intimated, "that an equivalent might be found for the emperor in the secularization of the three ecclesiastical electorates, and several bishoprics in Germany and Italy." He spake of making new electors; and named the stadtholder and the dukes of Brunswic and Wirtemberg as persons proper to replace the three ecclesiastical electors.—The tenor of his conversation leading to the total subversion of the present Germanic system, lord Malmesbury declared these ideas to be altogether incompatible with the principle laid down by the emperor and king, as the basis of the peace; at the same time hinting, that if, on all the other points, France agreed to the proposals now made, it would not be *impossible* that some increase of territory might be ceded to her on the Germanic side of her frontier; and that this, in addition to the duchy of Savoy, Nice, and Avignon, would be a very great acquisition of strength and power.—'M. de la Croix (says lord Malmes-

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bury) here again reverted to the constitution, and said that these countries were already constitutionally annexed to France. I replied, "that it was impossible in the negotiation which we were beginning for the other powers to take it up from any period but that which immediately preceded the war; and that any acquisition or diminution of territory which had taken place among the belligerent powers, since it first broke out, must necessarily become subject-matter for negotiation, and be balanced against each other in the final arrangements of a general peace."—"You then persist (said M. de la Croix) in applying this principle to Belgium?" "I answered, MOST CERTAINLY: *and I should not deal fairly with you if I hesitated to declare, in the outset of our negotiation, that on this point you must entertain no expectation that his majesty will relax, or ever consent to see the Netherlands remain a part of France.*—M. de la Croix replied, "he saw no prospect in this case of our ideas ever meeting, and he despaired of the success of our negotiation."

Passing to the affairs of Spain and Holland, lord Malmesbury mentioned, as still in force, the right vested in Great Britain, by the treaty of Utrecht, of opposing the cession of St. Domingo to France; which M. de la Croix, regarding doubtless the stipulations of a treaty of

peace as altogether superseded in a state of war, passed over with little notice: and when lord Malmesbury proposed that, in return for the *consent* of England to this cession, his Britannic majesty should retain Martinico, or St. Lucia and Tobago, M. de la Croix, astonished without doubt at the extravagance of the overture, which seemed obviously to imply that England was in actual possession of the Spanish part of St. Domingo, and that her consent was an essential requisite to the cession of it, silently dismissed the subject.—In relation to Holland, M. de la Croix treated as impracticable any attempt at restoring the antient form of government. He acknowledged, however, that it was not to be expected Great Britain would consent to a full and complete restitution of the settlements conquered from the Dutch: and when lord Malmesbury suggested the little probability there was that the Cape and Ceylon would be restored, the French minister launched out into a labored dissertation upon their value, affirming that they would ultimately be of infinitely greater importance to England than the Netherlands to France; and that, if this claim was acquiesced in, France would hold her possessions in India entirely at the pleasure of England. Lord Malmesbury, on the other hand, professed to consider them merely as affording

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an addition of security to England, but no additional power of attack: and his lordship asserted farther, that if these, *and perhaps some few other* of the settlements belonging to the Dutch, were to be insisted upon, still, it was impossible not to consider the terms on which his majesty proposed peace to Holland as generous and liberal.—At the close of the conversation 'M. de la Croix again asked me (says lord Malmesbury) "whether, in his report, he was to state the disuniting Belgium from France as a *sine qua non* from which his majesty would not depart?" I replied, "it MOST CERTAINLY *was a* SINE QUA NON *from which his Majesty would not depart;* and that any proposal which would leave the Netherlands annexed to France would be attended with much greater benefit to that power, and loss to the allies, than the present relative situation of the belligerent powers could entitle the French government to expect." M. de la Croix repeated his concern at the peremptory way in which I made this assertion, and asked, whether it would admit of no modification? I replied, "if France could, in a *contre-projet*, point out a practicable and adequate one, still keeping in view that the Netherlands must not be French, or likely again to fall into the hands of France, such a proposal might certainly be taken into consideration." M. de la Croix by

no means encouraged me to explain myself more fully: *he repeatedly said that this difficulty relative to the Netherlands was one* WHICH *could* NOT BE OVERCOME.' BOOK XXII. 1796.

Upon reading with impartial attention the account given by lord Malmesbury of this famous conference, it seems strange to find his lordship conclude with saying, "that the impression which remained on his mind on parting with M. de la Croix, from the civility of his manner, and apparent readiness to discuss the subject, was, that the negotiation would go on, though he saw little prospect of its terminating successfully." On the contrary, from the circumstances stated in the narrative itself, it was manifestly impossible that the negotiation could go on.—When the first overture was made by England in the preceding spring, France positively declared that she would not relinquish the conquests which had been actually annexed to the territory of the republic. She had not since shewn the least disposition to recede from this declaration, against which the English ministry exclaimed, as violent, arbitrary, and unjust. When, after an interval of six months, a second proposition for peace was made by England, surely France had reason to expect that the court of London would shew itself at length willing to treat upon that basis which was essen-

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tial to its attainment;—but she found herself most egregiously deceived. "A high and accomplished ambassador," as he was styled, came to Paris professedly invested with full powers to treat with the Directory. But the principle of compensation, on which he wished to set out, being admitted, it appeared that he had nothing to propose. An interval, however, being allowed to receive instructions, the plan of a general pacification was transmitted to him from London, which proved to be nothing more or less than a sweeping proposition founded on the *status ante bellum*. And it appearing, from the express and repeated declarations of lord Malmesbury, that the restoration of the Austrian Low Countries to the emperor, or at least that the absolute relinquishment of them by France, was a *sine qua non* of the projected treaty, all the other modifications of the plan suggested by lord Malmesbury were of no avail, and the negotiation was instantly at an end. On the next day, December 18, the English ambassador was required by M. de la Croix, in a cold and concise note, to give in his *ultimatum* officially in twenty-four hours, with a pointed and obvious reference to the *sine qua non* of the English cabinet; which lord Malmesbury, in handsome and guarded terms, declined to do—offering, at the same time, to enter with candor into the discus-

Ill success of lord Malmesbury's mission.

sion of the proposals of his court, or of any counter-project which might be delivered to him on the part of the Executive Directory. A counter-project, however, in this case, where an irreconcileable difference was acknowledged to exist, must be altogether superfluous: and M. de la Croix informed the ambassador, as before, "that the Executive Directory would listen to no proposals contrary to their constitution, their laws, and the treaties which bind the Republic:"—and notice was given to his lordship, whose part in the negotiation appeared merely passive, to depart from Paris in eight-and-forty hours; adding "that, if the British cabinet is desirous of peace, the Executive Directory is ready to carry on the negotiations, according to the above-mentioned basis, by the reciprocal channel of couriers." BOOK XXII. 1796.

On a review of this strange negotiation, there appears, on the part of the English ministry, a very disgraceful want of sagacity, or a still more disgraceful want of sincerity. This alternative it is impossible to evade. The French government had, on the former occasion, committed themselves completely on the subject of the annexation of Belgium to France; and there was surely no ground whatever to imagine that they would, at the close of a very successful campaign, recede from a determination which they Remarks upon the negotiation.

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had at the commencement of it so publicly and solemnly expressed. When this determination was once formed, the principle on which they founded, or the reasons by which they justified, it, were of no consequence to England;—the sole practical question to be resolved was, whether it were expedient to continue the war for the chance of wresting the Austrian Low Countries from France by force? It would indeed have simplified the business, and have deprived the English minister of a plausible and pompous topic of declamation, had the Executive Directory avowed its resolution to retain the provinces in question, in the language already *sanctioned* by the use of the English government, "as an indemnity for the past, and a security for the future." France was no less justifiable in making the retention, than Great Britain the restitution, of the Low Countries a *sine qua non* of the negotiation; and Mr. Pitt himself could not have denied, that for such general resolution not to treat, but upon certain conditions of advantage previously specified, the practice of *regular and approved governments* might be adduced. Not to advert to remoter instances, a very few years had elapsed since the court of London, after much idle menace and bluster indeed, yielded to a pretension of this nature advanced by one of her present allies, the

empress of Russia; who, in her late war with Turkey, had conquered and insisted upon retaining possession of Oczakow, and the surrounding country from the Bog to the Neister, as a preliminary of peace. With regard to the ambassador, lord Malmesbury, it was manifest, from the whole tenor of his correspondence, and particularly his long and elaborate account of the conference with M. de la Croix (December 18), that his talents had been extremely overrated. When the negotiation plainly turned upon a single point, he wandered into tedious discussions wholly irrelevant, ornamenting his discourse with turns of wit not very brilliant, intermixed with arguments *ad hominem* not very conclusive. His address and manners were notwithstanding perfectly decorous and polite; and his diplomatic ability appears not to have been unequal to the management of such negotiations as might reasonably be supposed to occur in the ordinary routine of politics. Upon the whole, as it could scarcely be imagined that the English ministry entertained the most distant expectation that France would be induced to recede from her claim respecting Belgium, too much countenance was afforded to the suspicions expressed by the Executive Directory, relative to the sincerity of the court of London, and their

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jealousy "that the step taken by that court had no other object than to obtain for the British government the favorable impression which always accompanies the first overture for peace," to which they might have added the advantage accruing to the British ministers from keeping up the farce of negotiation and pacification at home.

While this famous negotiation was pending, Mr. Burke, who, now no longer retaining a seat in parliament, had been recently rewarded for his services with a large pension from the crown, published a most furious, sanguinary, and frantic pamphlet, entitled "Thoughts on a Regicide Peace;" in which he urged, in his characteristic manner, the prosecution of the war, as a war *ad internecionem*. Deploring deeply the pusillanimity of Mr. Pitt in making these disgraceful advances to the regicide foe, he loftily exclaims:—"The minister had, in this conflict, wherewithal to glory in success, to be consoled in adversity. If it were not given him to support the falling edifice, he ought to bury himself under the ruins of the civilised world." Of this extraordinary performance, which everywhere bears the marks of great but eccentric genius, the writer, terrifically eloquent, may be compared to the SPIRIT of LODA, coming in the

roar of a thousand storms, and scattering battles from his eyes *; or to the image in Calphurnia's dream—blood spouting at every pore. Yet this very man, previous to his being possessed by this dæmoniac phrensy, could say, in the words of truth and soberness, "I cannot conceive any being under Heaven, which in its infinite wisdom tolerates all sorts of existences, more odious and disgusting, than an impotent helpless creature, without civil wisdom or military skill, bloated with pride and arrogance, calling for battles which he is not to fight." This was happily the last effort of a pen which had long been taught to inscribe only characters of blood. Falling into a lingering illness, increased no doubt by the morbid irritability of his mind, this grand incendiary of Europe expired, in a few months after this period, at once the object of pity, of abhorrence, and of admiration †.

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Death of Mr. Burke.

The young king of Sweden, Gustavus IV. having recently attained to the age of majority, the regency of the duke of Sudermania, his uncle,

* Poems of Ossian—Caric-thura, Vol. I.

† Knowledge and Wisdom, far from being one,
Have oft-times no connection.—
Knowledge is proud that he has learn'd so much,
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.
Books are not seldom talismans and spells,
By which the magic art of shrewder wits

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who had governed that kingdom for four years with great wisdom, was now at an end; and it was soon perceivable that the same caution and sagacity no longer governed the Swedish councils, which seemed, from this time, to be entirely under the influence of the court of St. Petersburg. Baron Stael, the Swedish ambassador at Paris, was replaced by M. Renhausen, a determined enemy of the republic. Representations having been made to the court of Stockholm, without effect, against this nomination, M. Renhausen received a peremptory order from the minister of the police to leave Paris; and the French envoy, in return, received a similar notice to quit the city of Stockholm: and all appearances portended a sudden rupture between the two nations. This event might possibly be retarded by the unexpected death of the empress of Russia, who died at this critical juncture (November 6, 1796), by a stroke of apoplexy, without any previous illness; retaining, to the age of sixty-seven years, her health, her vigor, and

Death of the empress of Russia.

> Holds an unthinking multitude enthrall'd.
> Some to the fascination of a name
> Surrender judgment hood-wink'd. Some the style
> Infatuates; and, thro' labyrinths and wilds
> Of error, leads them by a tune, entranc'd;
> While sloth seduces more, too weak to bear
> The insupportable fatigue of thought.
>
> COWPER.

talents for government, unimpaired and undiminished. Conformably to her artful and insidious policy, she had, from the very commencement of hostilities against France, exerted her influence in fomenting the flames of discord, and in instigating other potentates to the attack, while she herself stood aloof from the contest, at a safe and cautious distance. She did not hesitate very openly to express her contempt of the measures of the English court, and of the political abilities of the minister by whom they were chiefly directed; professing great admiration of the talents of Mr. Fox, whose sagacity and eloquence had so happily, in a late instance, prevented a rupture between Great Britain and Russia; and whose bust, wrought by the famous sculptor Nollikens, in obedience to her order, she caused to be placed between those of Cicero and Demosthenes. This extraordinary woman, who had attained the summit of power by very questionable, if not criminal, means, governed the empire of Russia, for the space of thirty-four years, with uninterrupted success and reputation: but the glorious actions of her reign were blended with injustice, and stained by cruelty; and, in the accomplishment of her ends, she never hesitated with respect to means. The fabulous ages of an Isis and a Semiramis must be resorted to, for a parallel to her greatness. The

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romantic extent of her empire, the luxury of her court, the barbaric pomp of her nobility, the victories achieved by her arms, and the gigantic views of her ambition, dazzled and astonished Europe. In the earlier part of her reign she much affected the praise of philosophy, and courted the friendship of D'Alembert, Diderot, and Voltaire. But the French revolution dispelled the phantoms of her imagination. Learning and the sciences, which she had patronized as the means of celebrating her glory, on a sudden became odious in her sight, and her latter years were embittered by suspicion and terror. But her apprehensions were vain. The wall of China is not so inaccessible as the barrier of ignorance and prejudice, which separates Russia from the regions of civilization and humanity. Still the native dignity of her mind occasionally displayed itself. She retained in the important office of governor and tutor to the children of the grand duke the republican La Harpe, nearly related to the celebrated general of that name, in virtue and in genius, as well as in blood; and he preserved to the last an high place in her esteem and favor. The plays and entertainments perpetually exhibited at the hotel of the Imperial ambassador, during the unexampled success of the French arms, very much displeased her. When news arrived of some victory

gained by the republic, it was remarked that this would be followed by a ballet at the ambassador's: "You will find (said the empress) that he reserves his best piece for the entrance of the French into Vienna*."—Her successor in the imperial throne of the Russias was her only son by the late czar, Paul Petrowitz; of whom the empress had entertained so great a dislike and jealousy, that he was, during her life-time, little known in any public or political capacity. But the general idea formed of his character was very far from being favorable to the new emperor, who, by the few acquainted with his disposition and temper, was said to be weak, violent, haughty, and capricious.

Nearly at the same time also died Victor Amadeus, king of Sardinia, in an advanced age: —an event which produced no sensible effect upon the general politics of the continent. He was succeeded in his precarious throne by his son, the prince of Piedmont.

And of the king of Sardinia.

* Secret Memoirs of the Court of St. Petersburg.

BOOK XXIII.

Session of Parliament, 1796-7. Pacificatory Speech from the Throne. Remarkable Protest of Earl Fitzwilliam. New Levies of Marines, Militia, and Cavalry. Statement of Finance. National Loan. Illegal Advance of Money to the Emperor. Motions of Mr. Grey and of Mr. Fox relative to the same. Motion of General Fitzpatrick relative to M. La Fayette. Message from the King to both Houses of Parliament, announcing the Failure of the Negotiation for Peace. Debates upon the Message, and Address to the Throne. State of Parties. Derangement of the Affairs of the Bank of England. Bank of England stops Payment. Affairs of the Bank investigated by Parliament. Second National Loan. Pacificatory Motions, by the Earl of Oxford and Mr. Pollen. Dangerous Mutiny in the Fleet. Important Motion of the Earl of Moira respecting Ireland—and of Mr. Fox on the same Subject. Petitions to the King for the Removal of Ministers. Address for the Removal of the First Lord of the Treasury, moved by the Earl of Suffolk. Address for the Dismission of Ministers, moved in the House of Commons by Alderman Combe. Motion by Mr. Grey for a Reform in Parliament. Motion of the Duke of Bedford for the Dismission of Ministers. Scottish Militia Bill. Session of Parliament terminated. Project of a new Administration—Rejected by the King. Military Transactions in Italy. Battle of Rivoli. General Provera surrenders. Capitulation of Mantua. Au-

strians retreat beyond the Brenta. Capture of Trent. General Bonaparte enters the Ecclesiastical States. Surrender of Ancona, &c. Plunder of Loretto. Peace of Tolentino. Ambassy to St. Marino. Archduke Charles supersedes Marshal Alvinzi. Austrians entrench themselves behind the Tagliamento. Entrenchments forced. Inspruck and Brixen captured by the French. General Bonaparte offers Peace to the Archduke. Austrians again defeated at Neumark and Hunsmark. Alarm of the Court of Vienna. Critical Situation of General Bonaparte. Preliminaries of Peace signed at Leoben. Subversion of the Venetian Government—and likewise that of Genoa. Foundation of the Cisalpine Republic. Operations on the Rhine. Descent of the French on the Coast of Wales. Victory obained over the Spanish Fleet by Sir John Jervis. Unsuccessful Attack on the Isle of Teneriff. Capture of Trinidad. Failure at Porto Rico. Victory over the Dutch Fleet by Admiral Duncan. Interior State of France. Royalist Conspiracy against the Government. Formidable Opposition to the Directory in the Councils. Triumph of the Directory. Fresh Attempt of the Court of London to negotiate with France. Lord Malmesbury a second Time appointed Ambassador. Progress and abrupt Conclusion of the Negotiation. State of the Gallican Church. Origin of the Sect of the Theophilanthropists. Treaty of Campo Formio. Congress at Rastadt. State of America. Extraordinary Reception of the American Commissioners at Paris. Arrest of the Portuguese Ambassador. Death of Count Bernstorff—and of the king of Prussia. National Thanksgiving.

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THE new parliament was convened at a season of the year unusually early, viz. the 6th of October (1796). The speech from the throne afforded much satisfaction, as the harbinger of

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returning peace. "I have omitted no endeavours (said his majesty) for setting on foot negotiations to restore peace to Europe, and to secure for the future the general tranquillity. The steps which I have taken for this purpose have at length opened the way to an immediate and direct negotiation, the issue of which must either produce the desirable end of a just, honorable, and solid peace, for us and for our allies, or must prove beyond dispute to what cause alone the prolongation of the calamities of war must be ascribed.—The fortune of the war on the continent has been various, and the progress of the French armies threatened at one period the utmost danger to all Europe; but from the honorable and dignified perseverance of my ally the emperor, and from the intrepidity, discipline, and invincible spirit of the Austrian forces, under the auspicious conduct of the archduke Charles, such a turn has lately been given to the course of the war as may inspire a well-grounded confidence that the final result of the campaign will prove more disastrous to the enemy than its commencement and progress for a time were favorable to their hopes."

BOOK XXIII. 1796. Pacificatory speech from the throne.

The addresses moved, being expressed in general and moderate terms, were acceded to with little opposition in both houses; excepting that lord Fitzwilliam, who had imbibed, in all their

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extent, the violent opinions of Mr. Burke, and who considered peace with France as involving in it danger, mischief, and ruin to England, entered on the journals of the peers a very elaborate protest, assigning no less than ten distinct reasons for refusing to concur in an address of approbation for setting on foot the present negotiation.

Remarkable protest of earl Fitzwilliam.

Mr. Fox congratulated the house of commons that his majesty's ministers had at length done what he had for three years earnestly advised; but he lamented that this measure had not been adopted before a hundred millions had been spent, and a hundred thousand lives been sacrificed, in this bloody and fruitless contest. He said he did not wish to recollect, much less to retaliate, the reproaches and invectives formerly pronounced against him, as degrading by his counsels the dignity of the British nation, and laying his majesty's crown at the feet of the French republicans.

On the 18th of October the house of commons resolved itself into a committee to consider that clause of his majesty's speech which alluded to the intention manifested by the enemy to attempt a descent on these kingdoms. In addition to the naval force now actually employed, and which the chancellor of the Exchequer declared to be more formidable than it had ever

been at any former period, he proposed—1st, a levy of 15,000 men, from the different parishes, for the sea-service, and for recruiting the regiments of the line, great numbers of which he stated to have fallen in defence of our foreign possessions: 2dly, he suggested a supplementary levy of militia, to consist of 60,000 men, not to be immediately called out, but to be enrolled, officered, and gradually trained, so as to be fit for service in a moment of danger: 3dly, Mr. Pitt proposed to raise a considerable force of irregular cavalry—every person who kept ten horses to provide one horse and one horseman to serve in a corps of cavalry, those who kept more than ten to provide in the same proportion, and those who kept fewer to form themselves into classes, and decide who, at the common expense, should provide the horse and horseman. These several propositions received the sanction of the two houses, and passed into laws; but the plan for raising an additional body of cavalry, though a second and third act passed to explain and amend the first, was framed in a manner so disgracefully crude, confused, and complex, that it was found totally impracticable in the execution; and it was in a great measure superseded by the numerous volunteer corps of yeomanry-cavalry which were, about this time, embodied in all parts of the kingdom.

New levies of marines, militia and cavalry.

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On the 21st of October, upon the motion of Mr. Windham, 195,000 men were voted for the land service, and soon afterwards 120,000 seamen and marines were voted for the naval service, of the year.

Statement of finance.

In the beginning of December the chancellor of the Exchequer made his annual statement to the house, according to which eighteen millions would be wanting, by way of loan, exclusive of five millions and a half of Exchequer-bills, and about thirteen millions and a half of Victualling, Transport, and Navy-bills, &c. which he proposed to fund; the interest of all which amounted to upwards of two millions per annum of additional and perpetual taxes. The mode in which Mr. Pitt proposed to fund the bills in question was very extraordinary; according to the different periods from which they bore date, they had fallen in the market to a discount of from seven to fourteen per cent. and the actual holders of them were an almost totally different class of men from the original possessors. They were now, to the immense emolument of the new proprietors, more especially of the recent purchasers, funded at par with the additional advantage of a bonus, averaging three per cent. together with the accruing interest due at Christmas and Lady-day next. Such were the means adopted by Mr. Pitt for obtaining *the confid-*

ence of the moneyed people! Mr. Pitt took this opportunity to acknowledge that he had made an actual advance to the emperor of divers sums of money to the amount of about 1,200,000*l.* and he should propose a vote of three millions to enable ministers to give the necessary assistance to our allies, in case we were obliged to persevere in the war. Mr. Fox rose, and with great warmth and energy stated "that the minister had it undoubtedly in his power, many months ago, to have consulted the house as to this subject; that having neglected so to do, and manifested a determination to dispose of the public money without the knowledge or authority of that house, he ought for this conduct to be *impeached.* And for what was this money thus illegally and unconstitutionally expended? Year after year had the minister calculated upon the events of the war; and year after year had the public been misled by his calculations. One hundred and fifty millions had been added to the debt of the country, and rivers of human blood had been made to flow. The minister now at length *talked* of peace; but as his skill in calculation was made a matter of boast, it might be wished that he would one day sit down in his closet, and calculate what a sum of human happiness he had destroyed already, what a waste of human life he had occasioned, and all this be-

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Illegal advance of money to the emperor.

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cause he could not sooner discover that the French were capable of maintaining the relations of peace and amity."—After these observations, which did not admit of any answer, the resolutions moved by Mr. Pitt were successively put and carried.

The measure thus adopted by the minister, of clandestinely remitting money to a foreign court, during the interval and even the sitting of parliament, was too extraordinary not to attract the farther notice of opposition: and when the report of the Committee of Ways and Means was brought up, December 8, Mr. Fox again took occasion earnestly to request the attention of the house to this subject. "Had ministers (he remarked) found themselves called upon by an imperious sense of duty, when parliament was not sitting, to grant a pecuniary aid to the emperor, and upon the meeting of parliament had submitted the reasons of their conduct to the judgment of the house, the case would have differed very widely from the present. In the course of the last three months of the preceding parliament, repeated applications were made to them respecting their intentions of granting or with-holding pecuniary assistance to the emperor; but they preserved a profound silence on the subject; and we now find that a great part of the money had been remitted to the emperor

when parliament was actually sitting. Did the right honorable gentleman fancy himself better qualified to judge of the time and extent of the assistance necessary to be granted, than the house of commons? As long as the question was open to debate and discussion, the house was kept in total ignorance relating to it: they are, however, ultimately informed of the transaction; —but at what period? When the money has been paid, and deliberation is precluded. Mr. Fox hoped that, on this occasion at least, parliament would vindicate its own dignity and importance. If the house should submit to this daring encroachment on their rights, and the commons should relinquish the guardianship of the public purse, there would be little left, after the late violent encroachments on the constitution, to distinguish our government from that of absolute monarchies."

Mr. Pitt asserted, in reply, "that the general principles stated by Mr. Fox were subject to limitations; that in the best and purest æras of the constitution extraordinaries and votes of credit had been recognized as warranted by the spirit of it. He allowed that the minister who exercised the discretion vested in him improperly was not exempt from censure; but the manner in which he understood the limitation referred to he would state when called upon

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to make his defence."—The house of commons did not, however, appear entirely to enter into the views of the minister upon this momentous topic, nor seem disposed to grant him their unreserved confidence on a point which so nearly affected both their privileges and their power.

Sir William Pulteney, a man respectable for his knowledge and independent spirit, who usually voted with Mr. Pitt, declared "the concern and astonishment which he felt at this unconstitutional appropriation of public money by the minister. It was indeed an undoubted and an unfortunate truth that extraordinaries and a vote of credit, must be granted in every year of a war; but surely subsidies to foreign princes could never be intentionally included in them. New and urgent circumstances might occur to render the exercise of ministerial discretion proper; but here the circumstances were known and public. The dilemma to which the house was reduced, from the necessity they were under either to confirm a transaction so contrary to the fundamental principles of the constitution, or by any retrospective resolution to shake the confidence of their allies in the public faith, thus pledged by the minister, was a great aggravation of his misconduct: and it was his opinion that a strong mark of censure ought to be inflicted by the house, in order for ever to prevent

any similar violation of their most essential privileges." BOOK XXIII. 1796.

Mr. Grey remarked, "that the insensibility of the house on former occasions to the danger which threatened the constitution had encouraged the minister to venture upon this daring measure; and that his boldness had risen in proportion to the obsequiousness of parliament. From the inspection of the papers before the house (Mr. Grey said) it appeared that the *whole* of the money had been remitted during the sitting of parliament, excepting the trifling sum of 77,000*l*. Will the house, on such a great constitutional question as the present, be satisfied with pompous declamation? Surely there is a barrier beyond which even the complaisance of that assembly would not allow his majesty's ministers to extend their predatory encroachments. *Vile* as the conduct of the last parliament had been, he did not believe they considered their vote of credit as conveying any such power to ministers; and he appealed to those gentlemen present who were members of the former house of commons, whether at the time the vote passed, they were in the remotest degree aware that they were giving two millions and a half of money to the emperor.—Mr. Grey moved that the second reading of the Bill of Supply should be postponed till the next day; Mr. Grey's motion respecting the illegal supply to the emperor.

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and he would then move the house to resolve that the minister had been guilty of a high crime and misdemeanor."

Mr. Wilberforce, who had on several occasions not without some effect upon the house, and still more upon the public at large, opposed the ruinous and frantic measures of the minister, had been, for a considerable time past, evidently wavering in his conduct. He now took a decided part in favor of the minister, and declared himself "averse to postponing the vote of supply even for a single day; affirming that the vote of credit, if examined *attentively*, would be found to convey an impression that ministers were authorized in employing the money entrusted to them in such a manner as the public exigencies might require."—After a long and ardent debate the house divided; and the numbers appeared to be, 58 for, and 164 against, the proposed postponement of the supply.

In order to compel Mr. Pitt to state the specific grounds on which he ventured upon a step so manifestly contrary to the spirit of the constitution, and by no means in consistency with the sense of the house, and much less of the nation, Mr. Fox, on the 14th of December, moved, "That his Majesty's ministers, having at different times, and during the sitting of parliament, directed the issue of various sums of mo-

Motion of Mr. Fox relative to the money advanced to the emperor.

ney for the service of his Imperial Majesty, &c. have acted contrary to the trust reposed in them, and have thereby violated the constitutional privileges of this house."—A vote of credit, Mr. Fox observed, had passed the house last year for the sum of two millions. This, or a large proportion of it, had been applied, not to make provision, conformably to the nature of such a discretion, for extraordinaries which could not be then foreseen or specified, but to the discharge of sums previously advanced to the emperor, of which no account had been rendered to parliament. Was it customary or proper to send money out of the country for purposes unknown to the legislature, when the minister might have consulted parliament on the expediency of the measure? On what principle could he thus act? Certainly on no other than that of establishing a precedent subversive of the rights of parliament. He might have had it constitutionally but he chose to take it otherwise.—Never was there a period in which the prerogative had been exerted with more effect against the rights and interests of the people than during the last two years. It had created new treasons and new crimes, and armed the crown with a power at which our ancestors would have shuddered. If in addition to this the privileges of parliament are to be destroyed by empower-

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ing the minister to dispose of the public money at his pleasure, where does any safeguard exist to what remains of the constitution?

The motion was seconded by Mr. Harvey Combe, one of the representatives of the city of London, in willing obedience as he said to the instructions of his constituents, who in common hall had that day in the most express manner directed their representatives to censure the conduct of ministers in granting away the public money without consent of parliament. He also as a merchant observed that the discounting of bills drawn for the purpose of remitting money to the emperor had been productive of extreme inconvenience both to the bank and to the mercantile interest, and had occasioned an alarming deficiency of circulating cash."

Mr. Pitt now at last felt himself compelled to rise and speak in his own defence. And in high and lofty language, such as evidently was not in unison with the feelings of the house, maintained not merely the utility and expediency, but the strict legality of the measure thus brought into question. In proof of the former he expatiated with dazzling eloquence on the different aspect which Europe now presented from that which it had done when the French were at the gates of Munich. When he looked to the unshaken firmness of the court of Vienna,

and the heroic intrepidity of the Austrian troops, he thought that every Englishman must rejoice in having aided with his contribution the energy of their arms. Every person must recollect the slow-measured and well-ordered retreat of the Imperial armies, together with their glorious subsequent victories. When he stated, and delicacy forbade him to do more, the *possibility* that these latter events depended on the sums which had been remitted from this country, it would be evident that there was no longer a question of their utility.—It had been his wish to postpone the loan if practicable until the gradual influx of trade had restored our credit to its proper level, and removed the difference which prevailed against us in the course of exchange. The opening of the campaign did not however permit him to wait that favorable change; but it was upon the credit of the proposed loan that the first advances had been made and formally recognized as such by the court of Vienna. Had this money been transmitted by virtue of an open loan and a public act of parliament, it was the opinion of the moneyed men without doors that it would have materially affected the course of exchange; and secresy was held to be essential to the proceeding.—In vindication of the legality of the measure he quoted a variety of precedents conform-

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ably to the tenor of which he endeavoured to make it appear that sums of money had been repeatedly advanced for purposes similar to the present, without the previous knowledge or consent of parliament. If he had infringed or violated the privileges of that house, or had been guilty of an aggression upon the constitution, he would not interpose as a plea the utility of his efforts. Let the constitution be satisfied and avenged, whatever were to him the consequences.—Admitting the existence of the discretion he contended for, it must doubtless be acted upon under the impression of a strict and severe responsibility. This he knew that he had incurred, and he indulged the hope that his readiness to meet the censure of his enemies in that house, would be accepted as a pledge of his devotion to the real interests of his country. He threw himself with confidence on the candor of the house, and would respectfully await its decision.

Mr. Bragge, a man of sense and moderation on the ministerial side of the house, after a few observations in which he agreed with the friends of the motion that the constant vigilance of the house was requisite over all the branches of the public expenditure, and lamenting that votes of credit and extraordinaries should be necessary, affirmed on the other hand that the

measure in question was justified by its utility. He therefore moved an amendment to the proposed resolution, importing, "that the measure of advancing the several sums of money in the account then before the house for the service of his Imperial majesty, though not to be drawn into a precedent but upon occasions of special necessity, was a justifiable exercise, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, of the discretion vested in his majesty's ministers by the vote of credit." BOOK XXIII. 1796.

Mr. Sheridan remarked that the real point to be decided lay in a very narrow compass. Had the fact charged upon the minister been proved? and was the principle relative to it rightly stated? It ought to excite the indignation of the house to hear the precedents cited by the minister as forming the basis of a constitutional practice; whereas admitting them to be cases in point, they could only be regarded as exceptions to the general practice, to be justified only by an urgent and obvious necessity. Could a few ministerial precedents change the nature, or invalidate the essential maxims of the constitution? But the fact was that these boasted precedents were wholly inapposite to the purpose for which they were dragged from their obscurity. The money sent to the emperor Leopold in 1706 amounted only to 47,000*l.* and that was paid

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to a general commanding a united army of British and Germans, the promise to give which was not made while parliament was sitting. The demand from Savoy, on which another of the pretended precedents was founded, was not made during the session; and though Turin was then actually besieged, Mr. Secretary Harley had replied that it was hardly practicable to give 50,000*l.* consistently with the constitution of England; nor did the queen send it without stipulating to deduct it from a subsidy already voted by parliament. The money remitted to the Duc D'Aremberg in the year 1742 for the purpose of putting the Austrian troops in motion was during the vacation of parliament: and upon that occasion a division took place in the house of 145 to 239. Extreme necessity was the plea for that measure; for the present there could be none; ministers could have had that constitutionally granted which they chose to seize illegally. Not one of all his boasted precedents was of any value. The argument that it was dangerous to make the measure public is applicable to every vote of subsidy, to every resolution of supply, to every measure of preparation. Indeed the principle on which this violation of the rights of parliament was defended appeared more dangerous than the application of it was impolitic. It was erecting the minister

into an absolute dictator. It was more than mortal arrogance; and joined with other parts of the conduct recently adopted, formed the subject of serious alarm. If ministers claim the right of landing foreign troops without consent of parliament, and of paying them by this process without application to this house, what and where is the security left for our liberties and for our constitution?—What would the venerable and illustrious father of the present minister think of the spirit of his son's administration could he look down upon the latter years of it, and see him covering the country with barracks and bastiles, and after putting the people under the subjection of the bayonet, and prohibiting them to meet in order to consult upon the means of redressing their grievances, proceeding in his climax of violence, wresting from them one after another all their rights, at last venture to usurp from the representatives of the people the privilege of disposing of the public money! Of all the ministers that ever governed the affairs of this nation the present was the man who had employed in his administration the worst of means, and entailed upon the country the greatest of evils."

The house after long and vehement debate at length divided upon the amendment, Ayes 285, Noes 81.

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On the 16th of December, general Fitzpatrick renewed the motion which he had made near three years since in favor of M. La Fayette, and his companions in misery, now removed from the dungeons of Magdeburg to those of Olmutz. There is something of mystery in the sufferings of these unfortunate victims which has never been developed. In the celebrated speech of Mr. Fox, May 10th, in the last session of parliament, he had mentioned the case of La Fayette in such terms of moving eloquence that "a general burst of indignation and sorrow broke from every part of the house of commons." These are the words of M. Gillet, aid-de-camp of general La Fayette, in a letter published by him in the London papers, dated May 27, (1796). "All Germany," says this gentleman, "disclaims with detestation any share in the unheard-of prosecution of La Fayette. All affirm that the emperor is utterly ignorant of it, and that his heart would shudder at the display of such base cruelty. When Madame La Fayette flew on the wings of affection and duty to Vienna to solicit the emperor for permission at least to give to her husband the consolation of her attentions in his prison, the young prince answered with tears in his eyes '*Je vous plains: la liberté de votre epoux ne depend pas de moi seul: cette affaire est bien compliquée: J'ai les*

mains liées.'—"Englishmen," exclaims M. Gillet, "what is that invisible hand which thus murders defenceless innocence in the dark!" BOOK XXIII. 1796.

The motion of general Fitzpatrick was again opposed by Mr. Pitt, who said, that though it had been introduced and supported in such a manner as to excite considerable interest, his judgment was not yet convinced. It was a question entirely out of our cognizance, and which, though it may command our commiseration, could not claim our interference. He denied in the most explicit terms that any influence had been used on the part of the British Court to the injury of M. La Fayette, or that any communication had taken place on the subject.

Mr. Wilberforce declared himself friendly to the object of the motion, and moved an amendment omitting that part of the proposed address which stated the detention of La Fayette, &c. to be injurious to the character of the allies and to the interests of humanity, and simply requesting his majesty to use his good offices towards effecting the liberty of these unfortunate prisoners. To this amendment the honorable mover readily acceded; but the motion in every form was vehemently opposed by Mr. Windham, who far from recollecting with complacency the part taken by La Fayette in the American war,

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of which he had himself been a firm and zealous opposer, charged that unhappy man with having gone fresh from our hospitable shores to wield the sword against us. He imputed all the violences committed at Versailles on the 5th and 6th October 1789, to the agency of La Fayette: and declared himself at a loss to conceive why gentlemen should attend to the sufferings of such a man when the recital of horrors occasioned by him every day filled their ears. He hoped that the house of commons would never consent to have it told to the ally of Great Britain, that its conduct was inhuman. For his part he thought it would be highly impolitic in the emperor to release M. La Fayette, who, if set at liberty, would be the promoter of fresh revolutions and convulsions. He was decidedly averse to humanity being extended to him, and thought it but just that he should be made an example of to the world, and that all men who commenced revolutions should receive the punishment due to their crimes. He deprecated any interposition in favor of a man whose only merit was that of having pulled down and destroyed the fabric of the established constitution of his country.

To this speech Mr. Fox made an animated reply. "Good God!" exclaimed that illustrious advocate of reason and humanity, "what

sentiments and doctrines have we not heard this night! M. La Fayette ought not to be pardoned because he was the beginner of the French revolution! he ought not to be pardoned because thousands had fallen through his means! If he was not to be pardoned because thousands had fallen, what must become of the right honorable gentleman himself and the ministers of England, who had caused rivers of blood to flow by their wild and horrid enterprizes? But the beginners of revolutions were to be punished however moderate and honorable in their views, however disinterested and patriotic in their conduct! Those who came after the beginners and tarnished the cause of liberty by their excesses might be pardoned, but not the first beginners! According to this new doctrine our illustrious ancestors, to whom we have been accustomed to pay honors almost divine, were to be execrated; Hampden was to be abhorred; but Cromwell the right honorable gentleman would excuse, because he found things prepared, and only took advantage of circumstances. Men who blackened the cause of liberty by their crimes were virtuous in comparison of those whose only object it was to rescue their country from tyranny. Had M. La Fayette assumed the character of a ferocious republican, and shared in all the excesses of the convention, he might

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at this day have been one of the directory, whom it might have been deemed necessary to implore by a solemn embassy to restore peace to England. But the right honorable gentleman has discovered that it would be impolitic in the emperor to restore M. La Fayette to liberty: he might enter into a cabal for bringing about a new revolution in France! The right honorable gentleman appeared in the new character of an ally of the French republic; he was negotiating for the Directory, and was anxious to save them from the peril of new machinations and new conspiracies."

Lord Hawkesbury expressed in terms of candor his sympathy with the sufferers of Olmutz; but Mr. Dundas reprobated both the motion and the amendment, and gave his thanks to Mr. Windham for his very powerful and instructive speech, which had corrected all the false and delusive notions which had been *sported* that night. The house then divided: for the amended motion 50, against it 132; and the original motion was afterwards put and negatived without a division.

Messages from the king to both houses, announcing the failure of the negotiation for peace.

On the 27th of December, a message from the king was laid before the house of peers by lord Grenville, stating, "That the negotiation, which an anxious desire of peace had induced him to open at Paris, had been abruptly termi-

nated by the French government;" and his lordship moved an address to the throne, approving the conduct of ministers in all the particulars of this transaction: to which the earl of Guildford proposed an amendment, stating the misconduct of ministers during the whole of the present war, and charging them with insincerity in every part of the negotiation. This produced an animated debate, which terminated in the approval of the address by a great majority.

On the 30th of December, Mr. Pitt moved the house of commons to take into consideration a similar message delivered to that house. Upon this occasion the minister pronounced one of the most eloquent, and at the same time one of the most insidious and sophistical, harangues of which there is any example in parliamentary history. He prefaced his speech with an exordium, lamenting in impassioned terms the failure of the late negotiation. He said "that he had fondly hoped we should have been relieved from the contest into which we had been forced against our will,—a contest produced by the repeated aggressions of an imperious enemy,—a contest undertaken from motives of inevitable necessity, undertaken to preserve our constitution, to defend the general security of Europe, and from a sacred regard to that good faith which we had pledged to our

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allies. From these causes we were forced into a state of warfare; and, whilst they continued to operate, we were also determined to persevere; and the regret he felt was therefore without despondency, his disappointment without despair. We had not (he said) ourselves to blame for this misfortune; it arose from the exorbitant pretensions of our enemies: nothing had been wanting on the part of this country to restore peace on the grounds on which alone it was desirable; for, when we wished for peace, it was for a secure and permanent peace.—In March 1796 an offer had been made to treat in that way which had been sanctioned by usage and the general experience of nations. The offer was met on the part of the enemy by advancing a preliminary of such a nature that no man could seriously justify and support it. The answer to Mr. Wickham was founded upon what France chose to call 'the law by which she was bound.' What law? A law of their own making! a mere internal regulation! a principle annulling all treaties, in open defiance of the rights of Europe and the received maxims of nations!—The next mode which was adopted was an application through the medium of a neutral minister: the ambassador of the court of Denmark made this application, in the name of his Britannic majesty, merely to know if they

would send passports for a plenipotentiary to be sent by his majesty to Paris. How was this application received? For some time no answer was made. At last the Danish minister was informed—not by a written answer to a written note, but verbally—that if a minister were sent, he would be furnished with passports when he arrived at their frontier. Had there been the most remote desire on the part of his majesty and his ministers to retard the negotiation, was not this enough to justify them in abandoning their attempt? But so anxious were they to obtain the blessing of peace, that they resolved to surmount these difficulties, and a flag of truce was sent over charged with a commission similar to what had been given to the Danish minister. After a time, the request was granted by the French government, not willingly, but of necessity.—The first object of the plenipotentiary was to do what was conformable to common sense and established usage; to fix some acknowledged basis upon which each party might come forward with some degree of certainty of obtaining the desired object. The basis proposed was 'that compensation should be made to France, for proportionable restitutions, from his majesty's conquests on that power, for those arrangements to which she should be called upon to consent, in order to

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satisfy the just pretensions of allies, and to preserve the political balance of Europe.' Was there any thing to be found of low sordid interest in this? We proposed to give up what the valor of England had acquired—not to aggrandize ourselves in any other manner, but to preserve our good faith to those who had a right to rely upon it.—The *basis* being, after much delay and difficulty, unequivocally acknowledged, it was requisite to consider what had been demanded under the above circumstances: not the return of antient possessions—not for liberty to maintain our independence, to reject the fraternal embrace, and prevent the organization of treason: these did not rest upon the permission of the enemy—they depended upon the patriotism of the people of England: we only desired to preserve our good faith inviolate, and were ready to sacrifice all our own advantages to obtain what we could not honorably give away without the consent of the emperor. All the propositions underwent discussion between the plenipotentiary and the minister. ONLY *as to the* NETHERLANDS *his majesty could on no account retract any part of his propositions; but every thing* ELSE *was subject to modification!*

"No sooner had the ambassador (lord Malmesbury) delivered in a *projet*, and announced that he was ready to enter into the

discussion of particulars, than he was ordered to leave Paris, and the negotiation to be carried on by means of couriers. Such was the studied insult that had been offered to his majesty!

"The Directory demanded, not as an *ultimatum* but as a preliminary, to retain all those territories of which the chance of war had given them a temporary possession, and respecting which they thought proper, contrary to the law of nations, to pass a constitutional decree, declaring that these should not be alienated from the republic. But this perverse and monstrous claim, in virtue of which territories acquired by force of arms were annexed to a State during the continuance of the war in which such acquisitions were made, could never be supposed to supersede the treaties of other powers, and the known and public obligations of the several nations in Europe. It was impossible that the separate act of a separate government could dissolve the ties subsisting between other governments, or extend to the abrogation of treaties previously concluded. Yet this had been the pretension to which the French government laid claim, and the acknowledgment of which they had held out as a preliminary of negotiation to the king of Great Britain and his allies.

"There was no principle of the law of nations clearer than this—that when, in the course of

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war, any nation acquired new possessions, that such nation had only temporary right to them, and that they do not become property till the end of the war: for, supposing the conqueror to insist upon retaining them, because he had passed a law that they should not be alienated, might not the neighbouring powers, or even the hostile power, ask who gave him the right to pass it? or what authority had he, as a separate state, by any annexation of territority, to cancel existing treaties, and destroy the equilibrium established amongst nations? Were this pretension tolerated, it would be a source of eternal hostility, and a perpetual bar to negotiation between the contending parties, because the pretensions of the one would be totally irreconcileable with those of the other: this, in the instance of France, had been as inconsistent in its operations as it had been unfounded in its origin. The possessions which they had lost in the war in the West Indies they had made dependent parts of the republic. Tobago, which had been lost in the preceding war, and which was recovered in the present by British arms, was made a part of indivisible France; nor should he be surprized to hear that Ireland, in consequence of their intention to invade it, was constitutionally annexed to the republic!—Allowing, however, that the decree in question was

a valid principle of the French constitution, was it an evil without a remedy? No: M. de la Croix confessed it might be remedied; but not without the inconvenience of calling the primary assemblies. And were we, then, after all our exertions to obtain peace, after being baffled in all our efforts by the pride and obstinacy of the French government, our propositions slighted, and our ambassador insulted,—were we now to consent to sacrifice our engagements, and to violate our treaties, because, forsooth, it would be some inconvenience to call their assemblies, in order to cancel a law incompatible with the principle of fair negotiation? Shall we so far forget our honor, our dignity, and our duty, as to acquiesce in such conditions? But this is not all the degradation to which they would have us submit—We must engage, and as a preliminary too, to make no propositions contrary to their constitution and the treaties which bind the republic!

"This restriction is more unreasonable than the other. The republic may have made secret treaties which we know nothing about; and yet that government expects that we are not to permit our propositions to interfere with these treaties. How can we know what the Dutch have ceded to France, or whether France may not have sworn never to give up the territories

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ceded to her by Holland? What secret article may be contained in her treaty with Spain, guarantying the restitution of Gibraltar, or some important possession belonging to his majesty? And after accepting terms, of which we are entirely ignorant, in what situation do we stand? We at last arrive at a discussion of the government which France may choose to give to Italy, and of the fate which she may be pleased to assign to Germany. In fact, the point is not how much you will give for peace, but how much you will suffer to purchase disgrace; how much degradation you will submit to as a preliminary. In these circumstances, then, are we to persevere in the war with an energy worthy of the British name and of the British character, or, by sending couriers to Paris, to prostrate ourselves at the feet of a stubborn and supercilious government, to do what they require, and submit to whatever they may impose? I hope there is not a hand in his majesty's councils who would sign the proposals, a heart in this house which would sanction the measure, or an individual in the British dominions who would act as the courier *."

* In the celebrated pamphlet of Mr. Erskine "View of the Causes and Consequences of the War," are to be found (p. 66—72) some admirable observations on the conduct of this negotiation, and on Mr. Pitt's singularly gross misrepresentation of the causes of its rupture. "The whole proceeding (says Mr.

To this specious and splendid harangue Mr. Fox made a most able and memorable reply. He began by observing "that the subject before them demanded, no less from its singularity than its magnitude, the deepest consideration. After a war of four years' duration, and which they had been repeatedly told was a war of unparalleled glory and success—a war certainly unparalleled in respect to the torrents of blood which had been shed, and to the treasure which had been expended in the prosecution of it—

Erskine) is neither more nor less than this:—The court of London having resolved upon a *sine qua non*, which they did not at first communicate, and which was in direct opposition to the former public *sine qua non* of France, as expressed in the March preceding, propose mutual compensation as the basis of negotiation. The Executive Directory being determined not to adopt *that* basis of compensation which should break in upon their former determination not to cede the territory of the republic, answer, 'That they cannot accept compensation as a basis unless they know what it comprehends; and they therefore demand of lord Malmesbury to state his specific proposition of compensation.' This demand the ambassador, in pursuance of his instructions, of course refuses, until the Directory should first admit the basis. After a considerable length of time in this dispute about nothing, the specified demand of compensation was transmitted to, and delivered by, lord Malmesbury, in which England demanded restitution to the emperor on the footing of the *status ante bellum*. This demand was not expressed in terms as a *sine qua non*, or ultimatum, upon the face of the confidential memorial; but in the collateral discussions with M. de la Croix it *was* expressed as a POSITIVE ULTIMATUM,

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so far are we from having gained any object for which we originally embarked in hostilities, that the minister had that night come forward in an elaborate speech, the intention of which was to prove that the enemy was become more unreasonable in their pretensions than ever. It would have been some satisfaction, in descanting upon the extravagance of these demands, had we been informed by what means the right honorable gentleman proposes to reduce them. How often have we been told, that the resources

that Belgium should not remain as part of France.—The Directory therefore repeated their former *ultimatum* upon that point, viz. 'that they would listen to no proposal contrary to the constitution, to the laws, and to the treaties which bind the republic.' This answer being *ultimatum* against *ultimatum*, upon a particular point, the negotiation was brought to an inevitable conclusion; and it is self-evident that this must have been its fate, in one day or in one hour, if Great Britain, aware with the rest of Europe, of the former determination of France regarding Belgium, and determined to continue to resist that pretension, had asked her *at once* whether she would consent to modify or abandon it?

"When the details of this negotiation came to be considered in the house of commons on the 30th of December last, the minister displayed all that dexterity and ability for which he is so remarkable. His object was to conceal from the house all these obvious conclusions, and to incense the parliament and the nation at the insolent unfounded pretences of France, which defeated, by their unparalleled absurdity and inadmissibility, the earnest anxiety of ministers for peace. He wisely, therefore, and ably and dextrously, kept in the back ground the thing re-

of the French nation were exhausted—that they were not only on the verge, but in the gulf of bankruptcy! Their exertions became the more miraculous in proportion as their ruin was the more confidently foretold. After the egregious failure of his former predictions, what claim can the minister possess to the confidence of this house in the present moment? If Belgium could be re-conquered by magnificent boasts, or pompous declamations within these walls, we should not have been reduced to the necessity

fused which formed the obstacle; he *prudently* suppressed the details of his own administration, which had given to France both the power and the temper to refuse the demanded cession of Belgium;—even the danger of suffering Belgium to remain with France was much sunk in his argument, and the evil mainly insisted upon was her *unfounded reason* for resisting the cession. He not only enlarged upon the injustice of a nation finally annexing a territory acquired during the war,—forgetting the annexation of Corsica by his majesty's solemn acceptance of its crown,—but, appealing to the French constitution, he denied that it established the annexation of the Belgic provinces. This part of the minister's speech was by far the most labored, argumentative, and ingenious; insomuch, that I could not help being struck in the moment with the force of that characteristic infirmity which seems to impel him, as it were by a law of his nature, always to act upon one principle under the pretext of another. The putting forward the reason of refusal, and keeping back the value of the thing refused, and the chance of retrieving it by the continuing the war, was only the parade and juggle of the day—It was to hide from the house and the country that we were actually to be at war for BELGIUM."

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of negotiating for its restitution, but have dictated the terms of peace long ago in the centre of Paris. Previous to the commencement of this fatal contest, with what earnest efforts did I labor to persuade this house of the propriety of sending an ambassador to Paris, who might certainly have treated with every prospect of success;—but those efforts were wholly unavailing. And when it is asserted that lord Malmesbury was dismissed in a way altogether unprecedented, the right honorable gentleman must surely have forgotten the manner in which M. Chauvelin was sent from this country. In every negotiation the difficulty of coming to any definitive arrangement must be infinitely increased by the mutual prevalence of distrust between the parties. And if that distrust was justifiable on our part, might not those who have been abused by ministers with every term of invective and reproach which language affords, be allowed to entertain in return some distrust of them? Could they fail to recollect, in receiving the assurances of lord Malmesbury's 'high consideration,' that lord Auckland was created a peer for denouncing them to the world as MISCREANTS who ought to be put under the sword of the law*? Two years ago, the minister,

* From the month of May 1789; that is to say, as soon as principles of political liberty began to emanate from the Con-

when pressed upon the subject of peace, made use of the memorable words, 'when France is in a condition to preserve the relations of peace and amity.' But when was she proved incapable of sustaining those relations? Since that æra she has made and maintained peace with Prussia, Spain, Naples, Tuscany, and the princes of Germany. How, with such open avowed opinions on your part can you expect to conciliate confidence? To negotiate with effect, you must relinquish your angry passions and your inveterate prejudices, which were the ori-

stitutional Assembly; "from that moment it became (says an excellent political writer) the diurnal task of every newspaper under the influence of the English Treasury to abuse the revolution, to pervert every good, to exaggerate every evil, to mutilate and misrepresent every fact, to traduce and outrage the whole French nation in every sentiment and operation." *Utrum Horum?* p. 21.

A distinguished writer already repeatedly quoted, and whose publication, consisting of twenty-four pages only, seems dictated by the mouth of wisdom herself, thus upon the same subject expresses his sentiments. "A mere offer to put an end to hostility while all the causes and all the effects of rooted hatred remain, can impose on no man. There must be a real disposition to peace; and this must be manifested by a temperate, if not amicable, language, and by all the acts of kindness and conciliation which a state of war will admit of; otherwise the forms of a negotiation avail nothing. If, while you offer peace in terms, your actions and discourses indicate nothing but suspicion, hatred, and revenge, you may possibly purchase a

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ginal cause of the war. If the country thinks the administration of the right honorable gentleman *a blessing*, they must choose between that blessing and peace. In a negotiation, such as that we are now investigating the merits of, a degree of frankness, perhaps imprudent in other circumstances, would have been the truest and wisest policy. The abilities of the right honorable gentleman are confessedly great in a certain line, and, as far as certain purposes go; but they are not suited to the peculiar and critical circumstances of the

cessation of arms by concessions and sacrifices; but you leave the enmity entire, and strengthen it against you by the price you pay for a temporary suspension of its effects. Whilst the negotiation lasted, invectives and abuse against the French Directory went on as usual, or with very little interruption, in the newspapers paid and instructed by our government. Every man in London knows that these papers speak the language of ministers, and that they are kept in constant pay on purpose to prepare the public to adopt the sentiments and views of government. The French know it as well as we do; and this knowledge governs their opinion of our sincerity, much more than the formal declarations and diplomatic phrases in use among ministers." '*Question Stated*,' p. 12.

Such was the case in the former war. "This outrageous language relative to America, (says Mr. Burke, in one of his political tracts) which has been encouraged and kept alive by every art, has already done incredible mischief.—Can it be true loyalty to any government to flatter their pride and passion; rather than to enlighten their reason?"

present times. It is now more necessary than at any other period to act with a noble and generous sincerity; instead of which the whole transaction displays the marks of prevarication, subterfuge, and evasion. Lord Malmesbury, who had at first no terms to propose, was afterwards instructed to bring forward such as could not be supposed to undergo much discussion—such as could not fail readily to attain the *purpose* of being rejected. If such consequence attached to Belgium, that a peace could not be concluded without its restitution, surely the Cape and Ceylon ought to have been offered for it. It must be undoubtedly an object of great regret to see Belgium annexed to the territories of the republic; but when negotiating upon a professed basis of compensation, let not ministers offer brass for gold. Could it be seriously expected that France would relinquish her conquests in the Low Countries, Germany, and Italy, for the pretended equivalent offered by the English ambassador? You must carry on the war for ever, unless your negotiations are resumed on other terms than those which have been rejected. The *sine qua non*, with respect to Belgium, is evidently the cause of the abrupt, though perhaps not unexpected, issue of the mission of lord Malmesbury. The ambassador having declared verbally, though in positive

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terms, to M. de la Croix, his majesty's determination not to relax upon that point, was asked for his *ultimatum* in writing, which being refused, he was then ordered to depart the kingdom. But are we likely, by the expenditure of a hundred thousand more lives, and a hundred millions more money, to effect the recovery of Belgium by force of arms from the French? Will the minister declare, in plain terms, that the war is continued, and peace indefinitely removed, upon that hopeless contingency? Looking to the incapable and disastrous manner in which the war has been conducted by the present ministers, what have we to expect but a repetition of misfortunes—a continual progress from bad to worse? I conjure the house to weigh the subject well, to consider its immense importance, and to meet the question openly and fairly. If the recovery of Belgium is in future to be the object of the war, let ministers declare it explicitly, that the members of this house, and the public at large, may know to what extent they are pledged to the continuance of the present war, the consequences of which were too dreadful to anticipate. With respect to the harsh language used by the French in the negotiation, had not that of ministers been equally peremptory? We had declared our resolution not to relinquish Ceylon

and the Cape in terms as strong as they had used not to relinquish Belgium. Upon what principle these reciprocal conquests were determined to be retained was, comparatively speaking, of no moment. But had not the Conventional Assembly of France as good and valid a right to annex the Low Countries to the republic, as the executive government of this country to annex Corsica to the crown of Great Britain? And would not the same language have been used by us, respecting Corsica, as the French had held respecting Belgium, if we had equally the power of enforcing it? After all, was the Imperial court a party to this demand? No; it was a *sine qua non* made in a matter which primarily concerned the emperor, but to which he had never formally assented; and which we did not know whether he himself would insist upon." —Mr. Fox concluded a most luminous and masterly speech, which in relation to that of Mr. Pitt operated as the sun dispelling a mist, by moving, as an amendment to the address, "that this house had learnt, with inexpressible concern, that the negotiation for the restoration of peace had been unhappily frustrated. In so awful and important a crisis the commons felt it their duty to speak to his majesty with that freedom and earnestness which became men anxious to preserve the honor of the crown, and to secure the

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interests of the people. They deplored that, from the memorials, &c. submitted to their consideration, his majesty's ministers appear not to have been so sincere in their professions for peace as their repeated declarations had indicated. The insincerity of the overtures made for that purpose was to be inferred from their having insisted, as a *sine qua non*, on the surrender of the Netherlands by France. That this house had farther to regret that his majesty's ministers had repeatedly refused to enter into any negotiation with the French republic, upon the arrogant and insulting pretence that the government of France was not capable of maintaining the relations of peace and amity amongst nations; and on this unfounded assumption had advised his majesty to continue a war ruinous in itself, after the defection of the major part of his majesty's allies. That his faithful commons will therefore proceed to investigate the causes of that misconduct, on the part of his majesty's ministers, which has involved this nation in her present misfortunes, and produced the failure of the late negotiation."—Upon the division, previous to which, as on other critical questions, a large proportion of the members left the house, the amendment, thus powerfully enforced, was rejected by 212 to 37 voices.

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State of parties.

The state of parties in Great Britain, at the commencement of the year 1797, was very extraordinary. The minister, Mr. Pitt, had now been in office thirteen years; and through a remarkable concurrence of circumstances, though he had originally risen into power by means the most questionable, and that power had appeared to rest upon a foundation the most precarious, he was now supported in office by what might, on a transient view, be well mistaken for the whole strength and riches of the kingdom. He possessed the entire confidence of the king, of a decided majority of the two houses of parliament, of the bishops and clergy, of the landed proprietary, of the great moneyed and mercantile interests. To this vast combination what could be opposed?—First, A comparatively small, but highly-respectable, minority of the different classes of the community here enumerated, at the head of whom was understood to be the prince of Wales, whose natural sagacity and liberality of disposition had led him, after the first transient moments of alarm, to a total disapproval of the entire system of ministerial policy:—and his sentiments were not the less firm and decisive because his political prudence induced him to abstain from an open and offensive avowal of them. Secondly, A clear majority of householders of the middle ranks,

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who were much less under the immediate influence of government than their superiors, and whose alarms had never reached to the fashionable pitch of extravagance. It must nevertheless be acknowledged that this class of persons, however respectable in themselves, discovered few symptoms of political vigor, unsupported as they were by almost all those who occupied the superior stations of life. Thirdly, the generality of men of speculation and literature, including not merely the theorists, who delighted in forming benevolent though visionary ideas of reform, but that far more estimable class of men, combining with their literary and philosophical acquirements an extensive knowledge of the great volumes of human nature and human life.—Men not of ability merely but of wisdom—well described by the celebrated monarch of Prussia, who says, "Il y a dans tous les etats un nombre de citoyens, gens senses, qui, loin du tumulte des affaires, les envisagent sans passion, et en jugent par la même sainement; tandis que ceux qui tiennent en main le gouvernail ne voient les objets qu'avec des yeux fascinés;"—such were the men whom Mr. Pitt had reason to regard as his deliberate and determined adversaries. Fourthly, The bulk of the lower orders, who felt heavily and experimentally the evils, the mischiefs, and burdens, of the war.—A remark-

able instance of the animosity of the populace against Mr. Pitt had occurred on the preceding 9th of November, when the minister, according to established usage, attending the annual feast at Guildhall, on the election of a lord-mayor, was treated by the mob assembled on the occasion with every species of insult and outrage. On advancing from St. Paul's to Cheapside his carriage was violently assaulted, and, had not the doors been secured by internal fastenings, it would have been forced open to the imminent danger of his person; whilst Mr. Fox, on the other hand, was received with all the popular demonstrations of joy and affection.

Derangement of the affairs of the Bank of England.

In the course of the present war the remittances to the emperor and other foreign powers pressed so heavily on the Bank of England, that early in the month of January, 1795, the court of directors informed the chancellor of the Exchequer, "that it was their wish he would arrange his finances for the year in such a manner as not to depend on any further assistance from them." These remonstrances were renewed in the months of April and July in the same year; and on the 8th of October following they sent a written paper to the minister, which concluded by stating "the absolute necessity which they conceived to exist for diminishing the sum of their present advances to government, the last

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having been granted with great reluctance, on their part, on his pressing solicitations." In an interview with the chancellor of the Exchequer, which took place on the 23d of the same month, on the loans to the emperor being mentioned, the governor assured Mr. Pitt "that another loan of that sort would go near to ruin the country." And on the 8th of November, 1795, the governor informed the chancellor of the Exchequer "that the daily large drains of specie from the Bank filled the minds of the directors with serious apprehensions; and that in the present situation of affairs he must not rely on any aids from them, not even the Vote of Credit and Supply bills."

In the course of the ensuing year, the reiterated demands of Mr. Pitt appear to have occasioned extreme uneasiness in the breast of the directors of the Bank, who neither knew how to comply or to refuse. In the month of July, having applied for two advances of 800,000*l.* each, one immediate, and the other in the course of the month, the court consented reluctantly to accommodate the Treasury with the first of these sums, but signified their disapproval of the second demand. Mr. Pitt, on receiving a copy of the resolutions from the governor, said, "he was obliged to the court for what they did grant, which he should accept

of;" but added, "that it would be of no material use unless the other requisition were complied with." And in a letter, dated July 28, 1796, he again urged the court of directors to advance the second sum of 800,000*l.*—adding his "farther and earnest request that the Bank would also make provision for the payment of such Treasury bills as may become payable in the months of August, September, and October;—in default of which the most serious and distressing embarrassments to the public service must arise." The court, on the receipt of this letter, agreed "with great reluctance, and contrary to their wishes," to adopt their own words, "to advance the second sum of 800,000*l.* and also to provide for the bills which should fall due in the month of August, but not afterwards; and this upon condition the chancellor of the Exchequer will engage that a new mode of paying the treasury bills shall be adopted immediately on the meeting of parliament, as the court declared themselves determined not to continue the present mode of discharging them any longer." This resolution was accompanied by an excellent memorial presented in form to Mr. Pitt by the governor, for the express purpose of being laid before his majesty's cabinet council. In this "serious and solemn remonstrance," as they term it, the directors de-

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clare, "that nothing could induce them, under the present circumstances, to comply with the demand now made upon them, but the dread that their refusal might be productive of a greater evil, and nothing but the extreme pressure and exigency of the case can in any shape justify them for acceding to this measure; and they apprehend that in so doing they render themselves totally incapable of granting any farther assistance to government during the remainder of this year, and unable even to make the usual advances on the land and malt for the ensuing year, should those bills be passed before Christmas. They likewise consent to this measure in a firm reliance on the repeated promises so frequently made to them, that the advances on the Treasury bills should be completely done away, may be actually fulfilled at the next meeting of parliament, and the necessary arrangements taken to prevent the same from ever happening again, as *they conceive it to be an* UNCONSTITUTIONAL *mode of* RAISING MONEY, *what they are* NOT WARRANTED *by their* CHARTER *to consent to*, and an advance always extremely inconvenient to themselves." This memorial, which might have sufficed to alarm any minister less daring in his designs and disposition than the present, seemed to produce no sort of effect; and the requisitions

of Mr. Pitt were still as urgent and pressing as ever. On the 1st of February, therefore, (1797) the governor and deputy-governor waited upon him, in order to represent how uneasy the court were at their large advances for government, and especially on the Treasury bills paid, which now amounted to 1,554,635*l.* and would, in a few days, be augmented to 1,819,818*l.*; and required that some effective measure should be immediately taken for the payment of the whole of this sum, as had been so seriously promised them should be done at the opening of this year. After much shuffling, Mr. Pitt engaged that 150,000*l.* should be paid off every week of the arrears of Treasury bills, at the same time *hinting* that new bills, to the amount of 700,000*l.* had appeared from St. Domingo; on which the governor expressed great apprehension, and begged that Mr. Pitt would put off the acceptance of them, acknowledging that a farther drain of cash from the Bank would be very dangerous, as the quantity of specie had been of late very materially diminished.—Things now seemed to be coming fast to a crisis. On the 10th of February Mr. Pitt proposed a loan for Ireland of one million and a half. At an interview which took place on the 18th, the governor told him "that such a scheme must have the worst effect possible;

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that it would cause the ruin of the Bank; for that such a loan raised here would all be sent over in money to Ireland, and would drain much of our specie from us." And at a meeting of the committee on the next day, the governor was authorized and enjoined to assure Mr. Pitt "that, under the present state of the Bank's advances to government, such a measure would threaten ruin to the house, and most probably bring them under the necessity of shutting up their doors." Mr. Pitt nevertheless persisted in his resolution, declaring to the governor "that he found it to be a measure of government absolutely necessary, notwithstanding the difficulties and dangers which they foresaw in the execution of it."

The public apprehensions, at this period, of an impending invasion from France, and possibly also the secret suspicion of the critical situation of the Bank, occasioned a run upon the Company so great as to excite the utmost anxiety of mind amongst the directors on the subject. Each day alarmingly increased the *deficit*. On the 24th of February the deputy-governor and Mr. Bosanquet had another interview with Mr. Pitt, in which, having now gone by far too great lengths to retract, laying aside their high tone of admonition and remonstrance, they in a manner threw themselves and the

Company at the feet of this despot-minister, "requesting of him to say how far he thought the Bank might venture to go on paying cash, and when he would think it necessary to interfere before the cash was so reduced as might be detrimental to the immediate service of the state." Mr. Pitt, having thus brought the Company step by step to the brink of ruin, replied in language very different from that of humble solicitation, "that this was a matter of great importance, and that he must be prepared with some resolution to bring forward in the council for a proclamation to stop the issue of cash from the Bank, and to give the security of parliament to the notes of the Bank; in consequence of which he should think it might be proper to appoint a secret-committee of the house of commons to look into the state of the Bank affairs." BOOK XXIII. 1797.

Bank of England stops payment.

In conformity to this intimation a board of council was held, and an order published on the 26th of February, prohibiting the directors from "issuing any cash in payment till the sense of parliament can be taken on that subject, and the proper measures adopted thereupon for maintaining the means of circulation, and supporting the public and commercial credit of the country at this important conjuncture."

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Affairs of the Bank investigated by parliament.

On the following day a copy of the order of council was laid before the two houses of parliament, accompanied with a message from the king, stating "that an unusual demand of specie having been made from different parts of the country on the metropolis, it had been found necessary to make an order of council to the directors of the Bank, prohibiting the issuing of any cash in payment till the sense of parliament could be taken." In both houses general addresses of thanks for his majesty's gracious communications were voted, and committees of secresy appointed to investigate the affairs of the Bank of England. In the course of the debates which ensued, very severe censure and reproach were dealt out against those who had brought the country into this novel and perilous situation, of which no one could divine the issue. It was remarked, "that when the minister presumed to plead necessity in justification of an act of power so alarming, he ought at least to have been prepared to shew that the necessity had been occasioned by no fault of his own: on the contrary, it was his unparalleled rashness and obstinacy which had created the necessity altogether. Let him repay the directors the ten millions they had advanced in dependence upon his reiterated and faithless

promises; let him refund the vast sums he had illegally and unconstitutionally remitted to the continent; and the difficulties they labored under would cease. It was not that the Bank were unable to satisfy their creditors, but it was the continued demand of money to feed the expenses of this ravenous and disastrous war which compelled them to be unjust. The directors, in contradiction to their better judgment, were trepanned and inveigled by the minister into the disgraceful predicament in which they stood; and the fatal order of council at last imposed upon them, was adopted only as the least of the evils to which they were subjected." At length an amendment was proposed by Mr. Sheridan to Mr. Pitt's motion for the appointment of a committee—"That the said committee should be also empowered to enquire into the causes which had produced the order of council of the 26th of February last," which was, after much debate, negatived by 244 to 86 voices.

On the 1st of March Mr. Fox moved that a separate committee should be appointed for the purpose above mentioned. This was vehemently objected to by Mr. Pitt as wholly superfluous; which indeed was, in a certain sense, but too true.—It was also opposed by Mr. Windham, who, bestowing high eulogiums on the minister,

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was reminded of his former memorable threat while yet adverse to the system he now supported—'that he would strip off the right honorable gentleman's embroidery, and expose to view the filthy dowlas which lay concealed beneath it.'—Mr. Wilberforce, likewise, hesitated not to declare "that, from the commencement of the war, much of the public calamity was owing to the conduct of opposition!" To that fickle and faithless part of the opposition, indeed, which voted alternately for and against the minister, without sense or system, this censure was but too clearly and directly applicable. Mr. Fox, in remarking upon the necessity of the proposed enquiry, asked, "Whether any man breathing had any doubt of the solidity of the Bank before the minister laid his rapacious hands upon the treasure deposited there, and which he had applied to the most unlawful and unconstitutional purposes? Enquiry (he said) was, at all events, indispensable; for, to use the celebrated argument of Demosthenes to the Athenians, if it should appear that the deplorable situation of the country was brought on by the gross misconduct of the minister, then the people would have the consolation to reflect that their affairs might yet be retrieved; but if, as the minister asserted, affairs had been conducted wisely and well, then the people could

expect nothing but inevitable ruin."—The house divided: for the motion 67, against it 141.

Upon the report of the committee, it appeared that the amount of demands upon the Bank was 13,770,000*l.*; that their assets, exclusive of the permanent debt due from government, amounted to the sum of 17,597,000*l.*; so that there remained a surplus of more than 3,800,000*l.* to which must be added the sum of 11,600,000*l.* three-per-cent. stock, lent at different times to government, on parliamentary security. This being estimated at fifty per cent. agreeably to the actual price of the three-per-cents. the whole of the capital vested in the corporation of the Bank, after the payment of debts, amounted to the vast sum of 9,627,000*l.* The publication of this report immediately allayed, and almost extinguished, the excessive alarm excited in the mercantile world by the stoppage of the Bank. A bill was forthwith introduced, confirming the order of council, and suspending the law for preventing the issue of notes under five pounds' value; in consequence of which the circulation of specie almost wholly ceased, and the kingdom was inundated with notes of twenty shillings' and forty shillings' value. A clause of the utmost importance was also inserted for preventing any person from being held to bail who offered Bank-of-England notes in discharge of debts;

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which was going, to every practical purpose, the length of making them a legal tender. But as government-collectors and officers of the revenue were not only permitted, but obliged, by a clause of the bill, to receive these notes in payment of taxes, immense as they were now become, no considerable inconvenience was in fact felt from this extraordinary state of things, by any class or description of persons. The notes themselves suffered not the least depreciation; and the disastrous consequences which might, with great probability, have previously been supposed to result from the daring and desperate conduct of the minister, were happily found to be fallacious.

On the 10th of March Mr. Sheridan moved several resolutions relative to the Bank, of which the most remarkable went to the restoration of that excellent clause in the original act of king William, restraining the Bank from making any advances to government but on funds granted by parliament, beyond the sum of 500,000l. under the penalty of forfeiting treble the amount, and which was most insidiously repealed by Mr. Pitt in the session of 1793. But so far were the directors of the Bank from concurring in this measure, that they made it an express subject of their complaint that they were required to advance money to government

in an unconstitutional manner. This was negatived by the accustomed ministerial majority. —The house being in committee upon the Bank Bill, Mr. Fox gave notice of an amendment to the second clause, "That the Bank should be prohibited from making any advances to government, by which the existing debt should be increased, during the continuance of the present act." Had this amendment, so obvious and rational, been carried, all Mr. Pitt's views of future and greater *accommodation* would have been frustrated; but it was, as usual, negatived at the instance of the minister, who had now completely succeeded in converting the Bank of England into a mere engine of government, in bringing an indelible disgrace on its reputation, and in making it entirely subservient to the advancement of his own ruinous and frantic projects. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

On the report of the committee on the Bank Bill, sir William Pulteney proposed a clause, the object of which was to enable the Bank to rescind the restrictions of the bill at any period less distant than the 24th of June, to which it was originally limited. But this was opposed by Mr. Pitt, and negatived, though by 36 voices only.

On the 24th of April, when the supplies of the year were supposed to be voted, and the exi- Second national loan.

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gencies of government fully provided for, Mr. Pitt suddenly came forward with proposals for a second loan, comprehending a great variety of deficiencies, and covering a vast mass of floating and unfunded debt, consisting of Exchequer-bills, Navy-bills, &c. adding also a vote of credit for three millions, with a view to another prodigal remittance to the emperor. The whole sum proposed to be funded was precisely eighteen millions, as before; and for every 100*l.* in money, 175*l.* three-per-cent. and 20*l.* four-per-cent. stock were to be granted by government, together with a long-annuity of 6*s.* 6*d.* For the interest of this second stupendous loan, raised upon terms so exorbitantly usurious, taxes were again imposed to the amount of 1,284,000*l.* which, conjointly with the taxes of the preceding loan, made up the sum of 3,416,000*l.* Such were the immense and incredible supplies which Mr. Pitt could extort from the people of England in a single session, in order to carry on the present incomprehensible war; although, when a sinking fund was to be created ten years previous to this period, he could never devise the means of raising one solitary additional million for that most salutary and important of all purposes—the redemption of the public debt! And so incorrect—or, to speak plainly and properly, so detestably deceitful—had been the estimates

presented to the house from time to time, that, in the four years which had now elapsed since the commencement of the present war, about fifty-one millions had been contracted with, and more than forty-nine millions without, the previous consent of parliament, as appeared by the papers laid before the house. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

"One of the pretended motives of this war," says an animated writer, "has been the defence and preservation of property; and it must afford some consolation to the friends of suffering humanity to be assured, that if it be continued a little longer on the present system of expense it will be the last war we shall ever have occasion to wage on this account.*"

* MORGAN *On the State of the Finances.* In speaking of the conduct of Mr. Pitt as a financier, it ought never to be forgotten that Dr. Price, to whose aid he had very properly recourse in framing his sinking-fund bill, urged it upon him very strongly to raise an additional million by new taxes, in order to make the entire surplus of revenue applicable to the purpose of redeeming the national debt, equal to the sum of two millions: but Mr. Pitt could by no argument or persuasion be prevailed upon to appropriate more than one million to that purpose. Yet Dr. Price, who deemed the plan of raising two millions perfectly feasible, has been abused as "the chief of the sect of political despondents;" and Mr. Pitt has been extolled for his vigor and courage in bringing forward a measure which his faithful and enlightened adviser regarded as contemptibly weak, and inefficient. In fact, Dr. Price never, at any period of his life, despaired of the country, supposing wise and able ministers placed at the helm of af-

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On the first of May Mr. Pitt moved for a loan of three millions and a half to the emperor, of which 1,600,000*l.* had been already remitted. Also another loan of one million and a half for the service of Ireland. The sum of 80,000*l.* was moreover granted as a portion to the princess-royal, on her marriage to the duke of Wirtemberg.

In the course of the session Mr. Dundas brought forward his statement of India finance; and in his speech upon this occasion he apprized the house, that though there appeared to be, from various causes, a decrease of revenue, owing to a diminution in the sale of certain articles during the war, and an increase of military arrangements, the Company's affairs were, notwithstanding, as favorable and as flourishing as the most sanguine person could wish; and the resolutions moved by him in affirmance of his statement were agreed to with little opposition.

Pacificatory motion by Mr. Pollen in the house of commons.

An address to the throne, of a pacific tendency, was also moved, during the session, by Mr. Pollen (one of the few proselytes from the

fairs; but, to the certain knowledge of the writer of this History, he did live to despair that any good would ever result to the people of this country from the administration of Mr Pitt, of whom he once entertained the highest and most flattering hopes.

majority) in the commons, giving rise to a debate, in which the questions respecting the conduct of ministers relative to the war, and the late abortive attempt at negotiation, were again ably and copiously discussed without producing any sensible effect. Mr. Pitt, addressing the house on this occasion, scrupled not to assert, "that peace did not depend upon their declarations, which were more likely to frustrate than to accelerate this object." Strange doctrine from one who had been himself a party in those declarations of the house which had been the means of terminating the American war. "We have tried the executive government (said Mr. Fox in answer) long enough to be convinced that no good would be done by confiding in the promise of ministers any longer. Let us not perpetually *talk* of our wishes for peace; let us use means for obtaining it. Let us trust ministers no longer; LET US VOTE for PEACE." The numbers on the division were 85 to 291. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

An address of similar tendency was also moved in the upper house by the earl of Oxford, so happily and excellently expressed, as to be well entitled, from its merit, to insertion at full length. It purported, "to represent to his majesty, that, in the present alarming situation of the country, the house considered it to be its duty to apprize him of his own danger and of the ruin which And by the earl of Oxford in the house of peers.

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threatened the nation: That the shock which had been lately given to public credit must deprive us of those means whereby we were enabled to hold our rank amongst nations, unless we were relieved from our present enormous expenditure by an immediate, sincere, and lasting, peace: That the house saw with concern that the late negotiation was broken off by the conduct and demands of his majesty's ministers, and not by want of disposition for peace on the part of the French: That, in answer to the note delivered by Mr. Wickham, the Directory declared, that, 'yielding to the ardent desire to procure peace, it would not fear to express itself openly: charged by the constitution with the execution of the laws, it could not make or listen to any proposal which would be contrary to them: the Constitutional Act did not permit it to consent to any alienation of that which, according to the laws, constituted the territory of the republic.' That it was impossible his majesty's ministers could have misunderstood this declaration; for in the note dated Downing-street were these words: 'To a demand such as this, is added a declaration that no proposal contrary to it will be made or listened to.' That six months afterwards the ministers again made overtures for peace; but in so ungracious a manner that their sincerity might reasonably

be questioned; and demanded, as their SINE QUA NON, those very terms which, before they began their negotiation, THEY KNEW WOULD BE REFUSED. That, under all these circumstances, the house humbly and earnestly intreated his majesty to enter into a negotiation upon such terms as France would be likely to listen and accede to, and in such a manner as would leave no doubt of a pacific intention. And the house begged leave to assure his majesty that it would entertain no doubt of the success of such a negotiation; and would feel confidence, after the restoration of peace, that such wise regulations might be adopted by the legislature as would relieve the people from their burdens, remove every complaint of unequal representation, restore their antient constitution, and ensure to his majesty the affections of his subjects,—the glory, prosperity, and happiness of his future reign." This uncourtly but seasonable and salutary address was rejected by a majority of 52 to 16 voices.

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So early as the month of February in the present year it was observed that symptoms of dissatisfaction appeared on board the Channel fleet; and some anonymous but not ill-written letters were received by lord Howe, 'the seaman's friend,' from Portsmouth, stating their grievances, and requesting his interest to obtain re-

Dangerous mutiny in the fleet.

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dress. These complaints were not of a political but personal nature, and related chiefly to the very bad quality of their provisions and to the scantiness of their allowance, notwithstanding the incredible extravagance of expenditure in the Navy and Victualling offices. These intimations being unfortunately neglected, on the return of the fleet to port, March 31, a general correspondence took place by letter from ship to ship, and at length it was unanimously agreed that no ship should lift an anchor till the demands of the seamen were complied with. On the 14th of April, lord Bridport, the admiral, unsuspicious of the mutiny, making a signal to prepare for sea, the seamen of his own ship, instead of weighing anchor, ran up the shrouds, and gave three cheers, which were instantly answered from the other ships. Delegates were then appointed from each ship to represent the whole fleet, who met in the admiral's cabin; and petitions being drawn up, were presented to the admirals then on the spot, praying for an increase of wages, and the establishment of various regulations respecting provisions; and expressing their hope that a satisfactory answer might be given to their petitions before they were ordered to put to sea again; qualified, however, with the remarkable exception, 'unless the enemy were known to be at sea.' On

the 17th the men were publicly sworn to support the cause in which they were engaged. On the next day a committee of the Admiralty, with earl Spencer at their head, arrived at Portsmouth, who made several propositions to reduce the men to obedience. The lords of the Admiralty next proceeded on board the Queen Charlotte, and conferred with the delegates from the seamen of the fleet, who assured their lordships that no arrangement would be considered as final until it should be sanctioned by the king and parliament, and guarantied by a proclamation for a general pardon. On the 23d the admiral returned to his ship, hoisted his flag again, and, after a short address to the crew, he informed them that he had brought with him a redress of all their grievances, and his majesty's pardon for the offenders. After some deliberation, these offers were accepted, and every man returned with cheerfulness to his duty. But, in consequence of a most hazardous and reprehensible delay in bringing this business before parliament, the spirit of mutiny was again excited, and on the 7th of May, when lord Bridport once more made the signal to put to sea, every ship at St. Helen's refused to obey. Admiral Colpoys, who attempted the restoration of discipline, was put under arrest, and several lives were lost in a skirmish between the seamen

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and marines. Immediate intelligence of this new and alarming instance of disobedience being transmitted to London, Mr. Pitt, on the 8th of May, thought fit at length to introduce the subject into the house of commons, and moved for the sum of 372,000*l.* for nine months' increased pay and allowance of provisions, commencing from the 1st of April, requesting that this motion might pass the house, to avoid all misrepresentation, by a silent vote. Mr. Fox said, "that it was by silence and the want of discussion the mischief had happened. If, when it was first known that the seamen were dissatisfied, the house had been considered as entitled to the confidence of ministers, and the business had been properly discussed, the events of Easter would not have taken place. But the delay which had intervened seemed purposely meant to give scope for misrepresentation." After an angry debate, the resolution passed.

On the succeeding day the subject was revived by Mr. Whitbread, who declared, that unless a satisfactory explanation was given respecting that fatal delay, for which the minister stood responsible to that house and the country, it was his intention to move a direct vote of censure against him. Mr. Pitt still persisted in his silence; saying only "that the necessary time had been taken for *preparing estimates.*" After

some severe strictures on the part of opposition, a message was sent to the lords, to desire that they would continue sitting for some time; and the bill, founded upon the resolutions of Mr. Pitt, was brought in, and passed through all its stages in both houses in one day. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

Lord Howe was immediately dispatched to Portsmouth as the welcome messenger of this intelligence, bearing also, with the Act of Parliament, his majesty's proclamation of pardon for all who should forthwith return to their duty. This celebrated veteran was received with the loudest acclamations of affection and applause; the officers were re-instated in their commands, the flag of disaffection was struck, and the fleet put to sea to encounter the enemy.

However speedily and happily this mutiny had been appeased, the example was very dangerous, and it was immediately followed by the North-Sea fleet lying at the Nore, under the command of admiral Buckner, consisting of eleven ships of the line and as many of inferior size. The mutineers, in imitation of what had been done at Portsmouth, chose delegates from every ship, of whom a man, named Parker, was appointed president. After having either confined or sent on shore their principal officers, they transmitted to the lords of the Admiralty a series of articles or conditions to which they

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peremptorily demanded compliance, as the only terms upon which they would return to obedience; though several of them were of a nature totally different from those insisted upon at Portsmouth, and altogether incompatible with the discipline of the navy. On the 23d of May the mutineers hoisted a red flag on board the admiral's ship the Sandwich, and dropped down to the Great Nore, in order to concentrate the scene of their operations. The mutiny having now risen to a most alarming height, a deputation of the lords of the Admiralty, earl Spencer himself, as before, being at the head, proceeded to Sheerness, and offered to the delegates the same terms which had been already accepted at Portsmouth with gratitude. But such was the insolence of this convention, that they insisted upon unconditional submission to their demands, as a necessary preliminary to any intercourse whatever. On which the deputation departed, after previously declaring, in firm language, "that the seamen were to expect no concessions whatever further than what had been already made by the legislature."

With the view of extorting compliance with their requisitions, the mutineers now proceeded to block up the Thames, refusing a free passage up and down the river to the London trade, supplying themselves with water and provisions

from the ships which they detained. Measures were now also adopted on the part of government to enforce submission. All intercourse with the shore was strictly prohibited; batteries were erected with furnaces for red-hot balls; gun-boats prepared; and, what extremely perplexed the mutineers, all the buoys were removed from the mouth of the Thames. The council of delegates now began in some degree to relent, and lord Northesk, captain of the Monmouth, who had been hitherto kept in confinement, was released, with a message from the president Parker "to the KING, wherever he might be," stating the ultimate conditions on which the ships would be given up. His lordship accompanying earl Spencer into the royal presence, accordingly delivered his message; and a privy-council being held upon the occasion, the demands of the seamen were again resolutely rejected. This being signified to the mutineers, symptoms of apprehension began to appear, and, on the 10th of June, several of the ships struck the red flag and hoisted the union; but no overtures were made to them. On the 13th, the Ajax, Standard, and Nassau, separating from the fleet, went under the protection of the guns at the fort of Sheerness. This excited despair in the remainder; and, on the same day, a resolution was taken to submit to the king's

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mercy;—Parker himself, who had in vain, and at too late a period, proposed putting to sea, surrendering quietly to a guard of soldiers, who had orders from admiral Buckner to put him under arrest: and, with about thirty other delegates, he was accordingly committed to the *black-hole* in the garrison of Sheerness. One of the delegates, Wallace, on the first appearance of the soldiers, in that spirit of heroic desperation which might rather have been expected from the president Parker, shot himself dead upon the spot. Parker being immediately brought to his trial before a court-martial, consisting of captains in the navy, was executed in a few days after on board the Sandwich. He died with resolution, but discovered no indications, either during the continuance of the mutiny, or subsequent to its suppression, of superior parts or sagacity. Had his talents been equal to his situation, he might have made himself very formidable to the government. The court-martial continued sitting more than a month, during which time great numbers were capitally convicted, very many of whom suffered the sentence of death; and it was not till after a long interval that a general pardon was granted, burdened also with many exceptions.

On the 21st of March the earl of Moira made an important motion in the house of lords for

an address to his majesty, "That he would be graciously pleased to interpose his paternal interference to remedy the discontents which prevailed in Ireland, and created the most serious alarm for that country and the dearest interests of Britain." His lordship acknowledged that the utmost care ought to be taken not to exceed the line of demarcation between the two legislatures of Great Britain and Ireland, and the utmost delicacy employed in the agitation of questions in which the privileges and independence of each other were involved. But he conceived the present motion to relate to a matter of common concern and mutual interest, upon which both countries had an equal right to stand forward. His lordship deprecated unprofitable disputation;—the time was now come when the exertions of every honest man were necessary to save the state from the calamities in which it was plunged. To prove the influence of the British cabinet over the councils of Ireland, if that could be a subject of doubt, he adverted to the recall of earl Fitzwilliam, at a period when all Ireland applauded the wisdom of his measures—when that country afforded the fairest prospect of tranquillity, and offered the surest pledge of assistance and support to Britain. To the impolicy of that measure, the present distracted state of Ireland, his lordship said,

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Important motion of the earl of Moira respecting Ireland.

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was undoubtedly to be imputed; and he urged the necessity of appeasing the existing discontents of the country, and of adopting such measures as would impress the people with confidence in the government.

Lord Grenville, in reply, pretended "that the present motion could not be adopted without tearing asunder every bond of union, and breaking the solemn contract subsisting between the two countries. He even ventured to deny the existence of discontent and disaffection to any considerable extent; but allowing that they actually prevailed, the benevolence of his majesty's disposition must be anxious to remove them. Instead of remedying discontents, the motion now offered to the house would inflame them, and induce the Irish to imagine their own legislature was careless of their welfare."

Lord Fitzwilliam said "he never would concur with the noble secretary that this country ought not to give any opinion upon the public situation of Ireland. Such interference, for the purpose of averting evils from both, was proper, and the right was clear.—The people of Ireland were reported, alas! by the noble secretary, to be tranquil and happy. Why then were whole parishes, baronies, and even counties, declared to be out of the king's peace? Was this tran-

quillity? Was this happiness? Was this a state of things by which this country was in no danger of being affected? This was a period (his lordship said) of awful portent. Storms and tempests impended over them, and it was their duty to exert every effort of human wisdom to avert the danger which threatened the empire. And was it then beyond the proper sphere of their lordships' consideration to address his majesty to employ his paternal care in co-operating with, and giving effect to, these efforts and exertions."

The earl of Liverpool, late lord Hawkesbury, gave it as his opinion, "that the motion was improper, whether intended to induce them in their legislative capacity to interfere in the affairs of Ireland, or to advise his majesty to exercise his executive authority in a particular way over that branch of the empire. Granting even, *for the sake of argument*, that all the evils complained of really existed, still he would contend they ought to be remedied by the Irish parliament, not by the British legislature, whose interference was calculated to aggravate, not remove, discontents. The motion was as mischievous in its tendency as it was unconstitutional in its principle."

The earl of Guildford observed, "that the argument of the secretary went not to protect the

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independence of the Irish parliament, so much as to secure ministers from responsibility. Neither the British cabinet, nor an Irish lord-lieutenant, were responsible to the Irish parliament; and if they were exempted also from the control of the British parliament, to whom were they responsible?"

The marquis of Lansdown warned the ministers "that they were prosecuting a system in Ireland which would, in its consequences, shake the British empire to its centre. If the grievances of Ireland had been redressed last year, the motion before the house would have been unnecessary: if not redressed this, the breach must grow still wider. Give the people of Ireland (said this noble lord) their rights, and you will require neither fleets nor armies to protect them."—After a long and interesting debate, the motion was negatived by a majority of 72 to 20 voices.

Mr. Fox's motion respecting Ireland.

Two days subsequent to this debate, Mr. Fox brought forward, in the house of commons, an address to the king, similar to that of lord Moira. In the course of a speech equally distinguished for its eloquence and wisdom, Mr. Fox declared, "that the bulk of the Irish nation sighed for the substantial blessing of a free constitution; and when he saw, as at the eve of the American contest, a government desirous to de-

cide by violence against the will of a majority, he clearly saw, as at that period, the danger of a civil war. He was the first person who pronounced the words "American War" in that house; and the expression was then ridiculed as absurd and extravagant. Some would, no doubt, treat the idea of an Irish War with the same contempt; and he sincerely wished that he might not be found so true a prophet as in the former instance. Ireland was now in that state where the executive power was every thing, and the rights of the people nothing; and in which it was necessary to keep the inhabitants in subjection by force. But was it possible to convince them by the bayonet that their principles were false, their pretensions unjust? and was the exercise of martial law to prove to them their enjoyment of a free constitution? What must be the effect of such measures? Would it not induce the most loyal to question the excellence of that monarchical form of government under which they suffered such calamities? When we wanted the assistance of the Catholics, was it politic to refuse their demands? or would their submission to laws they detested, last longer than our force and their impotency?—For myself (said this great statesman) I know of no way of governing mankind but by conciliating them. If Ireland is thus governed, will she be less useful to Britain than at present, when, so far from

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adding to the strength of the empire, she occasions a great and powerful diversion from it? The consequences of a war with her were dreadful to contemplate.—Public horrors would be so much increased by the laceration of private feelings, as to spread universal misery through both countries. Rigor had been already attempted; let conciliation be tried before the last appeal is hazarded. Let the whole people of Ireland enjoy the same principles, the same system, the same operation of government, and all classes an equal chance of emolument. The more Ireland feels the advantages of her connection with England, the more will she be bound to English interests."—Mr. Fox touched next upon the removal of lord Fitzwilliam. He asked those who best knew the country, "whether the day of his departure was not a day of sorrow? The Catholic petition was rejected; and the present distracted state of Ireland had been produced by the hopes of the people being disappointed, and by the cup of enjoyment and liberty having been suddenly dashed from their lips." He concluded his speech by moving an address to his majesty, "that he would be pleased to take into consideration the disturbed state of Ireland, and to adopt such lenient measures as might appear best calculated to restore tranquillity and conciliate affection."

The motion was seconded by sir Francis Burdett, a young man of great personal and political rectitude of character, accompanied with high and lofty sentiments of liberty, which time and experience only seemed wanting to mellow and mature. This gentleman, without hesitation, avowed his opinion, "that there was but one way of saving Ireland—of saving England; and that was by divesting the present minister of the power he had so long and so fatally abused, and calling him to a strict account at the tribunal of his country." 1797.

Mr. Pitt opposed the motion as improperly calculated to advise his majesty to give effect to measures which, constitutionally, could originate only in the parliament of Ireland, the natural source of legislative arrangements in that country. He objected also to the measures meant to be recommended by the motion, and affirmed that farther concessions would be highly imprudent on our part. By introducing Catholics into the legislative body, the acts of settlement, and the very existence of the established church in that kingdom, would be endangered; nor was it upon such a foundation that he would build the future fabric of the peace of Ireland. To agree to any essential alteration of the present constitution of parliament, while such principles were abroad in the world, and

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were even prevalent in this country, would be attended with the most pernicious consequences."—The speech of Mr. Pitt gave occasion to a masterly reply from Mr. Fox; at the close of which he observed, " that he had been a long time deprecating coercive measures. He had deprecated the adoption of them against America in 1774; he deprecated them against France in 1792; and he now deprecated the same system in Ireland. Though his advice had not been followed, it was a consolation to him, individually, that it had not been withheld. Measures of coercion had proceeded from the same source. War had been preferred to negotiation, and force to conciliation; because, instead of regulating our plans by a mild and enlightened policy, we had acted upon the maxims of barbarous times. And quoting the words of CICERO, he recommended the sentiment inculcated in them to the serious consideration of every person to whom the important task of legislation was assigned. ' *Carum esse civibus, bene de republicâ mereri, laudari, coli, diligi, gloriosum est: metui vero, et in odio esse, invidiorum, detestabile, imbecillum, caducum.*'—After a variety of speeches on both sides, the house divided; for the motion 84, against it 220—a majority proportionably much less than usual.

In the course of the spring many popular meetings were held agreeably to the restrictions of the new act, and some faint hopes were excited that the spirit of the people would be at length rouzed to something like national exertion. The object of these meetings was to petition the king for the removal of ministers. That from the city of Westminster was remarkably full and strong, and attracted much attention. It commenced by stating the uncontrovertible facts, "that in the four years' prosecution of the present war ministers had squandered upwards of 130 millions of money, and had imposed taxes to the amount of six millions and a half annually." The petition then proceeds in the following terms:—"We humbly represent to your majesty, that in the hands of those ministers nothing has succeeded. Instead of restoring monarchy in France, they have been compelled to recognize the republic there established, and to offer proposals of peace to it. Instead of dismembering the territories of that republic, they have suffered it to add to them the Netherlands, Holland, and great part of Italy and Germany: and even a part of these kingdoms, which the fleets of that republic have insulted, has only been preserved from the calamities of an invasion by the accidents of the seasons.

Petitions to the king for the removal of ministers.

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"In their negotiations for peace they have been equally unsuccessful. It was to be expected. When they asked peace they were abject, but not sincere; they acknowledged their impotence, but not their errors. They discovered the most hostile dispositions towards France at the very time they proved their utter inability to contend with her.

"When they wanted to obtain our consent to the war, they assured us that it was necessary for the safety of our commerce. At this moment most of the ports of Europe are shut against us; goods to an immense amount are lying upon the hands of our merchants, and the manufacturing poor are starving by thousands.

"They assured us the war was necessary for the preservation of property and public credit. They have rendered every man's property subject to an order of the privy-council, and the Bank of England has stopped payment.

"They assured us that the war was necessary for the preservation of the constitution. They have destroyed its best part, which is its liberty, by oppressive restrictions upon the right of petitioning, and upon the freedom of the press; by prosecuting innocent men under false pretences; by sending money to foreign princes

without the consent of parliament; while, by erecting barracks throughout the kingdom, they give us reason to suspect their intention of finally subjecting the people to military despotism. 1797.

"They assured us the war was necessary for the preservation of the unity of our empire. But they have so conducted, and are still so conducting, themselves in Ireland, as to alienate the affections of that brave, loyal, but oppressed and persecuted, nation, and to expose the most flourishing of its provinces to all the horrors of lawless military violence.

"These are no common errors; they are great crimes; and of these crimes, before God and our country, we accuse your ministers.—They have tarnished the national honor and glory; they have oppressed the poor with almost intolerable burdens; they have poisoned the intercourse of private life; they have given a fatal blow to public credit; they have divided the empire, and they have subverted the constitution."

These petitions encouraged the members of opposition in both houses to bring forward motions of the same tenor and purport. On the 27th of March the earl of Suffolk, after premising a few general observations on the alarming situation of public affairs, and on the character

Earl of Suffolk's motion for the dismissal of the First Lord of the Treasury.

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of the first minister, Mr. Pitt, whom he stigmatized as incapable in every respect, except in the arts of deceiving,—declared "that he considered it as a duty which he owed to himself, his king, and his country, to move, that an address might be presented to his majesty, humbly requesting him to dismiss from his councils his minister, the first lord of the Treasury, whose pernicious measures had deprived him of the confidence of the country."—Lord Grenville warmly vindicated the character of his friend, Mr. Pitt, "the failure of any of whose measures, he was certain, could be justly attributed only to those errors to which human nature was at all times liable—to those accidents which no human wisdom could prevent, or to those dispensations of Providence which no human power could control; and he complained that the charges against him were not substantiated by proofs."—The duke of Norfolk, in reply, remarked, "that the proofs were every-where; they presented themselves to every eye, they made impressions upon every heart, they composed a living epitaph upon the infatuation of ministers—*si monumentum quæris circumspice.*" —The earl of Moira thought the present motion highly necessary. "The mismanagement of ministers had brought us to the disastrous situation we were in, and they could not too soon

be deprived of the power they had so grossly abused."—The marquis of Lansdown, in answer to lord Grenville, who had boasted that the country had been preserved from Jacobinical principles by the laudable exertions of his majesty's ministers, said, "that he believed there were very few persons of those principles in this kingdom; and that he knew of no such practical Jacobins as the ministers themselves. They had banished gold and silver from circulation; they had taken up the paper system at the time France had laid it down; they had recourse to arbitrary measures, military force, and pretended plots, with every article of Jacobinism as it had been previously practised in France: It was the virtuous juries of 1794 which defeated the Robespierrian system attempted to be established in this country by his majesty's ministers."—The motion was finally rejected by a majority of 86 to 16 voices.

Address for the dismission of ministers moved in the house of commons by Alderman Combe.

On the 19th of May the subject was brought forward in the lower house by Mr. Alderman Combe, one of the representatives for the city of London, who prefaced his motion for an address to the king, beseeching him to dismiss his present ministers, with some very seasonable and apposite remarks. "By ministers (he said) the war had been frequently declared both just and necessary. In both these points he had al-

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ways differed from them. But from the authors and approvers of the war it was at least to be expected that they should point out some fixed and settled principle by which it was intended to be guided, and some object at which it aimed. On the contrary, we were sometimes said to be fighting for one purpose, and sometimes for another, and were still left at all times equally in the dark. The decree of November, and the opening of the Scheld, were in 1793 the ostensible causes of the war, and we sought merely indemnity for the past and security for the future. In 1794 it was the restoration of the constitutional monarchy. In 1795, the re-establishment of social order, and the relations of peace and amity. Lastly, in 1796, the *sine qua non* of lord Malmesbury. It was now submitted to the consideration of the house, whether the present ministers, who had so rashly precipitated the country into the war, and had manifested such incapacity in the conduct of it, were likely to be more successful in obtaining that desirable blessing—tranquillity? He was perfectly of opinion with his constituents, that they were not: it required men of greater minds, and more upright intentions, to bring about this object."—Mr. Curwen avowed his belief "that the present ministers neither would, nor perhaps could, make peace for this country; and, as the situation of

the country rendered the speedy restoration of that blessing absolutely necessary, he felt it his duty to support the motion."—The ministers, Pitt, Dundas, and Windham, who deemed it perhaps decorous not to take part in this debate, were defended by Alderman Lushington, Mr. Hawkins Browne, Mr. Dent, Mr. Pierrepoint, Mr. Burdon, &c.—and the motion was negatived by a vast majority of 242 to 59 voices. 1797.

Motion by Mr. Grey for a reform in parliament.

On the 26th of May Mr. Grey made his final motion relative to a reform in parliament, which he had so frequently, at different times, and in various modes, brought under public and parliamentary discussion. This able and zealous advocate of reform in general had not, however, yet attempted that great desideratum,—a specific plan of reform at once rational, feasible, and beneficial. Such was the object of the proposition now submitted to the candor and judgment of the house. Mr. Grey solemnly affirmed "that he sought not to alter any part of the constitution, but merely to obtain for the people a full, fair, and free representation in parliament, to which they were incontrovertibly entitled. He proposed that the county representation should continue upon the same footing, only that the number of county members should be increased from 92 to 113; the addition to be made to the larger counties in proportion to

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their population. In order to put an end to compromises, counties should be divided into districts, each of which should return one representative: the right of elective franchise to be extended to copyholders and leaseholders: the remaining 400 members to be returned by one description of persons, viz. HOUSEHOLDERS: the poll to be taken throughout the kingdom at one time; and the same person not to be permitted to vote for more than one member: the duration of parliament to be limited to three years. Upon this plan (Mr. Grey said) the members would hold their seats, not indeed on the basis of universal suffrage, but of universal representation. The qualification would be so fixed, that no man, however mean, might not hope, by honest industry and fair exertions, to raise himself to this distinction." The motion of Mr. Grey was seconded in an elaborate and eloquent speech by Mr. Erskine, who reverted to those better days when the liberties of the country were established by the exercise of the constitutional powers of that house. "We could recollect with pride and triumph the glorious exertions of our forefathers within those walls, when tyranny, century after century, was combated and defeated, and the freedom of Englishmen was asserted and confirmed. The only cure for the evils of government was to make the

house of commons what it had been in the days of our ancestors, when it preserved the liberties of the people, and was crowned with their love and veneration." BOOK XXIII. 1797.

Mr. Pitt opposed the motion upon precisely the same grounds on which his own propositions on the same subject had been formerly contested. "Was it not better (he asked) to endure some inconvenience, rather than hazard the annihilation of a system under which this country had flourished in prosperity, had been supported in adversity, and acquired energy and vigor to recover from the distresses which it had endured? It had never (he said) been contended, that the inequality of the representation had been attended with any practical disadvantage; that the interest of Yorkshire had been neglected because it sent only two members to parliament; or that Birmingham or Manchester experienced any ill consequences from having no representatives. The proposition now stated was new, extensive, overturning all the ancient system, without substituting any real benefit. On what experience, on what practice, was it to be introduced? Were we to renounce the benefits of a tried system for a theory which had no example in its favour? After all, this plan would be far from satisfying the speculative and democratic partizans of reform without doors. Men who

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could treat parliament as usurpation, and monarchy as an invasion, of the rights of man, would reject with scorn any propositions which did not include a recognition of their rights; and which they would regard as vitiated, if conveyed in any other shape." Mr. Pitt, in conclusion, avowed his total disapprobation of the plan proposed, and gave his decided negative to the motion.

Mr. Fox, at the close of the debate, rose in defence of the motion; and recalled to Mr. Pitt's recollection the words used by him on bringing forward his own original motion of reform in 1782,—" 'Without a reform in parliament the nation cannot be safe. This war may be ended, but what will protect us against another? As certainly as the spirit which engendered the present actuates the secret councils of the crown, we shall, under the influence of a defective representation, be involved in new wars and similar calamities.' This was the right honorable gentleman's prophesy, and it has been fully accomplished. Another war did take place, equal in disaster, and at least equal in disgrace! It seems as if his whole life from that period had been destined for the illustration of the warning. It was remarkable (Mr. Fox observed) that every prediction hazarded by Mr. Pitt, during the course of the present war, had failed; every

promise, every expectation, every hope, had proved fallacious; yet parliament continued to confide in him: and the only one of his predictions which was entitled to regard, the only one which had been verified in the result, was that which had been unfortunately slighted and neglected.—Mr. Fox appealed to the house, whether they were the faithful organs of the public will? Can we (said he) review the administration of the right honorable gentleman without being convinced that the present representation is a shadow and a mockery? Ministers had affirmed the popularity of the present war; the same had been said of the war with America; nor would he deny that, through the artful machinations of ministers, a clamor had been raised, which they called the voice of the nation; —but whatever had been the case in the outset of both, the progress in the public opinion had been the same in each. It had indisputably changed, though the voice of the people had not been heard in the choice of representatives. Had the representative system been perfect, or its practice pure, the new parliament would decidedly have voted against the continuance of the war.—With respect to the specific proposition before the house, Mr. Fox thought the best and most advisable plan of reform was to extend the right of election to householders: it

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was the most perfect recurrence to the first-known and recorded principles in our constitution, according to the celebrated Glanville, in all cases where no particular right intervened; and he wished it to be discussed in a committee, in hopes that the united wisdom of the house might improve the present outline into a system generally beneficial and acceptable.—In conclusion, Mr. Fox expressed his assurance that the nation, by adopting wise and temperate measures of reform, that the monarchy and the people, might yet be saved. Let those ministers who have plunged us into our present state retire from the post to which they are unequal. A new administration, composed of men who possessed the talents of conciliation, must be formed; but of this new administration Mr. Fox solemnly protested that he had no wish to make a part. Ambition was dead within him. He sought only the salvation of the country, and his desire, as to himself, was henceforth RETIREMENT."—The question being put, after long debate, the house divided; for the motion 63, against it 258 voices.

Duke of Bedford's motion for the dismission of ministers.

On the 30th of May the duke of Bedford rose, in pursuance of notice given, to move an address to the throne, humbly beseeching his majesty to dismiss his present ministers from his presence and councils for ever. This address

was supported by the noble mover in a very able and comprehensive speech. Recapitulating the errors of the present administration in all its relations, foreign and domestic, and stating the evils actually produced, and the still greater to be apprehended from them, his grace solemnly appealed to the house, "whether they would suffer the country to be devoted to utter destruction? Will you (he exclaimed) leave its affairs to men who have already involved you in such complicated calamities? I intreat your lordships to reflect upon our situation as a nation, and that you would devise some means of avoiding the complete ruin with which we are threatened."—The motion was powerfully seconded by the duke of Grafton. This nobleman, whose age, character, and long experience in affairs, commanded the respect and attention of the house, observed "that there were not wanting those who attributed to chance, the chance of war, all the misfortunes which had befallen us; but he ascribed them to the uniform folly and rashness of ministers, as their real, sole, and obvious cause. This chain of disasters (said his grace) could no more have fallen out by chance, than the globe we walk on could have been produced by a fortuitous concourse of atoms. For himself, he protested before God and his country, that, so far from abetting the pernicious

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counsels which were bringing on the downfall of the empire, he had endeavoured to the utmost, by every constitutional means, to avert them. If the present motion were received with the same cold indifference which had been hitherto shewn, and if the same confidence was continued to the same ministers, he should not think it necessary to trouble the house with his remarks again. But before he retired, to fortify his own mind against the calamities he saw approaching, he conceived it to be a duty incumbent upon him to lay before his sovereign, in person, the reasons of his conduct, flattering himself that he should experience the same gracious and attentive hearing which his majesty had ever vouchsafed to one who had always spoken the unbiassed and genuine dictates of his heart."

The earls of Guildford and Suffolk, the marquis of Lansdown, and the earl of Moira, all successively spoke with vigor and ability in favor of the motion, and made every effort to impress the house with the conviction, that to give any further countenance to the present system, a system fraught with mischief and ruin, would be involving themselves in the guilt of it. The duke of Athol, lord Romney, lord Spencer, &c. defended the measures of administration; and lord Grenville, to supply all deficiency of argument, touched again the master-chord, which never

failed, even in the most unskilful hands, to awaken the passions of the house. He claimed for the present ministers, whatever might be their errors or their faults, the transcendent merit of having preserved the country from that anarchy to which he affirmed the language and general conduct of the opposition tended. A reform of parliament was their grand specific for all grievances; but to this measure he had invariably objected, as conceiving it to amount to a complete alteration of the constitution. "The plan lately proposed (his lordship said) went to pluck up by the roots every right planted by the constitution; and if the flood-gates were once opened to innovation, the torrent of anarchy would spread so forcibly, and so wide, that it would not be in the power of their lordships, by opposing their feeble hands as a barrier to destruction, to prevent the constitution from being overwhelmed in ruin. And he declared his belief, that the *object* of the motion was to promote, not a change of ministers, but a revolution in the country."—The duke of Leeds, who usually voted with administration, after expressing his disapprobation of a parliamentary reform, remarked, "that the noble secretary had made the constitution depend as it were upon the continuance of the present ministers in office, which was rather too much to con-

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cede. Though he would not assert that these ministers were intentionally wicked, he could not help considering them as peculiarly unfortunate."—After a speech from the lord chancellor, enforcing the arguments of lord Grenville, the house divided; for the motion 12, against it 65.

The revolution of France was an event so great, and the immediate consequences of it proved so disastrous, that it could scarcely be for a moment banished from the mind in discussing the interesting subject of political and national reform. Two grand and directly opposite conclusions were with plausibility deducible, and, by different persons, were actually deduced from it. *First,* The adversaries and enemies of reform inferred the danger of all innovations, and deprecated even the discussion of any topics of this nature, from the extensive and inascertainable consequences attending the most temperate and well-intentioned designs of alteration and improvement. This was at all times a prevailing sentiment with those who had little to hope and much to fear—with persons of high rank, great property, and more especially with those who derived advantage and emolument from the very abuses which were the prominent objects of reform. But the late events in France had so heightened and extended this dread of

innovation as strongly to affect the majority of the middle classes, and even for a time of the vulgar, who are naturally the friends of innovation, as having more to hope than to fear from the consequences of a change. *Secondly*, The advocates of political reformation, reasoning altogether differently, inferred the utility and necessity of it from the calamities and disasters of the French revolution itself. For had timely and seasonable reforms been made by the French government, while it yet possessed the power of reforming, no revolution would have happened. But, on the contrary, the government there resisted to the utmost every effort to correct even the grossest abuses; and nothing was effected but in opposition, and, as it were, defiance, of the government, which, by this means, gradually lost its influence and its energy. The passions of the people were rouzed by continual contention; and the torrent of innovation, breaking down all the dams and mounds of law and custom, carried every thing before it, and the government and people were involved in one common ruin. But how different would be the case were the government of England to take the business of reform into its own hands! The mischiefs in France were occasioned by the jealousy and distrust, or rather the open animosity and hostility, subsisting between the constituted

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authorities—the king and the National Assembly. But in Great Britain, were the king and parliament to unite in carrying into effect a general reform upon temperate and liberal principles, such as were obviously calculated for practical advantage, who could entertain the remotest idea of a superior control? Even those who place the highest stress upon abstract speculations of right, but who certainly never did or can expect them to be acted upon in their full extent, would acquiesce with cheerful and grateful hearts; and the clamors of the few, if any such there are, who really wish to involve the nation in confusion, would be lost in the acclamations of the many who must abhor the idea. "Consider seriously (says Mr. Burke, in his admired speech on œconomical reform) the wisdom of timely reformation. Early reforms are amicable arrangements with a friend in power; late reformations are imposed upon a conquered enemy. Under a state of inflammation, the people see the abuse, and they will see nothing else."

If, as a preparative to these necessary and sober domestic reforms, the executive government had acted with caution and moderation abroad, had anxiously avoided making itself a party in the continental quarrels; if, on the contrary, England had endeavoured, with generous frankness

and good faith, by amicable interposition, to accommodate those quarrels, and to mediate between the contending powers; if, in a word, she had resolutely adopted and persisted in a system of mildness, œconomy, and good will to all, and had embraced the favorable opportunities which peace would no doubt have afforded of increasing the amount, and adding to the energy, of the too inadequate fund set apart for the liquidation of the public debt; it is impossible to conjecture to what heights of felicity and glory the nation might in a few years have attained. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

As to the particular mode in which national reform, so desirable in itself, and so earnestly desired by many, ought to be conducted—it is sufficient to say, that, like every other important undertaking, it must, in order to be ultimately successful in its operation, be conducted in the spirit of wisdom. "The public (says a man of talents, who has been unjustly stigmatized as a favourer of violent reform, Mr. Horne Tooke) ought never to receive a benefit at the expense of an individual." Reforms ought, therefore, to be in a great measure prospective, and, as far as the influence of them is felt at all, it should be felt as beneficial. Reforms merely speculative are to be avoided; as all theories are delusive, if not dangerous, which do not tend to

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practical advantage. Above all, it will be the constant care of a wise government to enlighten the people on the subject of their duties and their rights—infusing into their minds, by gentle and rational means, just ideas of government—encouraging and patronizing those writers whose works are calculated to enlarge the sphere of the human understanding, and to enforce a willing obedience, upon just and equitable principles; so that government may neither exact too much, nor the people yield too little. Who can estimate the value of such writings as those of Locke, Hoadley, and Addison, in this view, both to the government and to the community of a country?—"To say that a blind custom of obedience (to quote the language of one of the greatest of mankind, lord Bacon) should be a surer obligation than duty taught and understood, it is to affirm that a blind man may tread surer by a guide than a seeing man can with sight *."

Scottish militia-bill.

Towards the end of the session a bill was introduced into the house of commons, by Mr. Dundas, for raising and embodying a militia in Scotland; which was soon after passed into a law, found by experience exceedingly obnoxious to the people of Scotland; the method of ballot

* "Advancement of Learning," Book I.

and the principle of compulsion being equally disliked on the north as on the south side of the Tweed. But obedience was finally enforced, as formerly in England, by the irresistible argument of the musquet and bayonet. 1797.

Session of parliament terminated.

On the 20th of July, 1797, the parliamentary session was concluded in the usual manner by a speech from the throne, in which his majesty intimated to the two houses "that he was again engaged in a negotiation for peace, which nothing should be wanting on his part to bring to a successful termination, on such conditions as were consistent with the security, honor, and essential interests of his dominions."

Project of a new administration—rejected by the king.

At this period an extreme dissatisfaction prevailed throughout the nation from the general sense entertained of the incapacity of the present ministers, either as ministers of peace or war; and a great number of the most respectable and independent members of the house, who had usually voted with Mr. Pitt, held consultations with each other respecting the formation of a new administration, of which it was intended that the earl of Moira should be the head; for the majority of the associated members were, in a greater or less degree, *alarmists*, and conceived that Mr. Fox, for whom they professed a high personal admiration and regard, had pledged himself farther than they could, in

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consistency with their own views and principles, follow him, in the cause of political and parliamentary reform. It was understood that the prince of Wales favored and patronized the designs now in agitation—the earl of Moira being known to possess the entire confidence of that great personage.

Previous to the summer recess, some persons of the highest respectability and eminence severally demanded audiences of the king, amongst whom were the duke of Grafton and Mr. Fox. The former of these had once enjoyed a large share of the king's favor, and still held a distinguished place in his esteem. The object of this nobleman, as of others high in rank and reputation, who conceived themselves under an indispensable obligation of duty to state their sentiments at this crisis to his majesty in person, was, according to general opinion and report, respectfully, though unreservedly, to represent to their sovereign the pernicious nature and ruinous consequences of the present system, and the absolute necessity of some alteration in it, in order to avoid the impending danger. The magnanimous mind of Mr. Fox was impelled by an additional motive; and conceiving himself and his counsels to be unacceptable to the monarch, he thought it becoming his character, conformably to his recent intimation in parliament, to impart

to his majesty his intention of retiring from public life, that he might not be considered as an impediment to the projected change. It was imagined by many, that, at this crisis, the ministers themselves wavered in their resolution, and would have acceded, with no violent opposition on their part, to the new system. But as, on the one hand, the king shewed a most inflexible determination to support the present men and the present measures,—so, on the other, the parliamentary adherents of Mr. Fox, men conspicuous for talents and reputation, and without whose concurrence the new administration could not be formed, resolved unanimously to take no active part in any arrangement of which Mr. Fox was not the political head; so that this well-intentioned effort proved altogether unavailing *.

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* From this period the duke of Grafton returned to the enjoyment of that retired and rural life in which he had found so much more satisfaction than in the highest attainments of ambition. Nothing less indeed than the urgent call of public duty, as was perfectly well known to his friends, could have induced this highly-respected nobleman to have quitted those peaceful and happy shades,

"Where smiling Euston boasts her good Fitzroy;
Lord of pure alms, and gifts that wide extend,—
The farmer's patron, and the poor man's friend."

Vide the singularly beautiful and extraordinary production of natural taste and genius recently published under the appropriate title of THE FARMER'S BOY.

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Military transactions in Italy.

The military transactions of this year were peculiarly interesting. The unfortunate result of the invasion of Germany by the generals Jourdain and Moreau during the former campaign, and the extraordinary success which had attended the exertions of general Bonaparte in Italy, led the French government to bend almost their whole attention to this quarter, and the war upon the Rhine appeared to be in a manner suspended.—Although nothing but a series of disasters had been experienced by the Imperial generals in their repeated attempts to defend the Italian possessions of the emperor their sovereign, the power of the house of Austria displayed itself very conspicuously in the speedy reparation of their losses; and the armies exterminated seemed, like the heads of the Hydra, to be instantly supplied by others. After the battle of Arcole, new levies were made throughout the hereditary states, and vast reinforcements sent with such expedition to general Alvinzi, that he was able to take the field once more in great force early in the month of January (1797). Passing the Brenta, he advanced to the Adige; and, carrying by assault the important post of Corona, compelled the French under general Joubert to fall back upon Rivoli. General Bonaparte, who had been for some time past at Bologna, was no sooner apprized of

this new and unexpected irruption than he re- BOOK XXIII. 1797.
sumed in person the command of his army, now strengthened by reinforcements, and immediately changed general Joubert's plan of defence into an attack.

On the succeeding day (January 14) a general engagement took place, in which prodigious displays of skill and valor were exhibited by the combatants on each side. Towards the close of the day, the Austrians, who were much superior in number, appeared to have decidedly the advantage,—the main body of the French being driven into their entrenchments, and the two wings completely disordered. General Bonaparte, perceiving the perilous nature of his situation, determined upon one final effort, and ordered a numerous column from the right wing of the Austrians, which had taken a commanding position upon the heights behind Rivoli, in the rear of the French, from the Adige to the Lake of Guarda, to be attacked by a body of chosen troops with fixed bayonets. This service was most effectually performed: the Austrians, who had supposed the battle gained, fled panic-struck towards the lake, and great part of the column surrendered almost without resistance. This, however, was, on the part of the French, rather an escape than a victory. Two hours before day-break, on the 15th of January, Battle of Rivoli.

BOOK XXIII. 1797. the battle was renewed with redoubled fury. After a gallant resistance, the main body of the Austrian army was dislodged from their position; and the left wing, posted on the Heights of St. Marco, being surrounded, were either killed or taken prisoners.—This was not the only disaster sustained by the Austrians. General Provera, at the head of a column of ten thousand men, composed chiefly of volunteers, many of them of the best families of Vienna, who had received from the empress a sort of consecrated standard, worked with her own hands, marched with all the chivalrous feelings of the antient crusaders to the relief of Mantua, expecting a powerful co-operation from general Wurmser, who had previous notice of their intention. An attack was accordingly made by that brave veteran, with the whole force of his garrison, on the post of La Favorita, while Provera attempted that of St. George; but in both instances without success: and after the defeat of Alvinzi at Rivoli, general Bonaparte was enabled to detach large bodies of troops, which, surrounding Provera, and securing the passes on all sides, at length, after a brave resistance, compelled the Austrian general to surrender, with his remaining forces, at discretion: So that, since the commencement of the new year, the French boasted to have taken no less than

General Provera surrenders.

25,000 prisoners and 60 pieces of cannon; and the fourth Austrian army sent to Italy, in the space of a few months, was entirely broken.— The garrison of Mantua having now lost every hope of succour, and being reduced to extremity by disease and famine, at length capitulated on honorable terms; and that almost impregnable fortress, upon which little impression had been made by the arms of the besiegers, submitted to the republican, though she had for centuries resisted the monarchical, power of France. Subsequent to the fatal battle of Rivoli, the shattered remains of the Austrians had repassed, with precipitation, the rivers Adige and Brenta; and part of the left division retreated through Roveredo to Trent, of which the French, under general Joubert, took peaceable possession.

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Capitulation of Mantua.

Austrians retreat beyond the Brenta.

Capture of Trent.

The late measures of the court of Rome seemed to indicate that the aged pontiff was bent upon his own destruction. Instead of observing an exact neutrality between the belligerent powers, or offering, in the spirit of Christian catholicism, to interpose his paternal and healing mediation, he seemed actuated by a settled rage against the French republic, equally furious and impotent. Count Manfredini, first minister of the grand-duke of Tuscany, had apprized cardinal Busca, secretary to his holiness, that general Bonaparte was far from wishing to co-

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operate in the destruction of the papal see; that he acknowledged some of the articles of the armistice to be such as his holiness might justly regard as inadmissible; and that he was disposed to render them more favorable: but the pope, most absurdly confident in his own resources, and proud of the Imperial alliance, treated these indirect overtures with neglect or contempt, and made great warlike preparations throughout his dominions, to second the efforts of general Alvinzi previous to the battle of Arcole,—the event of which, with the succeeding defeat at Rivoli, left the Roman pontiff at the mercy of his enemies.

On the 1st of February, 1797, general Bonaparte published a manifesto, delaring the violation of the armistice by the pope, charging his holiness with refusing to listen to the pacific overtures of the republic; with having entered into hostile negotiations with the court of Vienna; with having put his troops in motion, and entrusting the command of them to Austrian officers;—and, depending probably upon the known pusillanimity of the inhabitants of the ecclesiastical states, the manifesto concluded with dreadful denunciations of vengeance against those who offered any resistance to the march of the republicans.

The papal army lay strongly entrenched on

the banks of the Senio, where they were attacked by the division of general Victor on the second of the same month. The encounter, though short, was sharp. During the engagement several priests, with crucifixes in their hands, animated, by their exhortations, the Roman troops: but they were unable to stand the shock of the bayonet, and were driven from their entrenchments with the loss of fifteen hundred men and fourteen pieces of cannon—that of the French amounting to no more than forty killed and wounded. General Bonaparte, now taking the command in person, advanced to Faenza, the gates of which were shut against him. The place was immediately carried by assault; but no pillage or plunder was allowed. This had an happy effect. In a few days the Romagna, the duchy of Urbino, and the whole marche of Ancona, submitted to the French. In the town of Ancona was found a large magazine of arms and ammunition, including a fine train of artillery, which had just been sent to the pope from the emperor. A division of the republican army also proceeded to Loretto, whence the greater part of the treasure had been previously removed. The remains of that costly but absurd and useless collection of wealth, the contributions of superstition and folly, were, however, without any remorse of conscience, secured; the my-

General Bonaparte enters the Ecclesiastical States.

Surrender of Ancona, &c.

Plunder of Loretto.

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teries of the sacred chapel, and the miraculous house, or *sancta casa*, with all the religious trumpery which they contained, were exposed to vulgar gaze; and the celebrated Madona, or image of the Virgin, so long the object of awe and adoration, was packed up in a case, with the relics of her wardrobe and furniture, consisting of rags of coarse woollen cloth, earthen spoons, &c. and sent as trophies to the Directory.

General Colli, who, with the papal army, had been posted near Ancona, retreated with precipitation at the approach of the French; and, no-where attempting to make a stand, the republicans proceeded, without any obstacle, through Macera to Tolentino, within a few days' march of Rome; when general Bonaparte received a letter written by the pope in his own hand, and conceived in the following terms:—

"DEAR SON, Health and Apostolical Benediction.

"Desirous of terminating, in an amicable manner, our actual differences with the French republic, by the withdrawing the troops which you command, we send and depute towards you, as our plenipotentiaries, two ecclesiastics, —the cardinal Mattei, who is perfectly known to you, and his lordship of Galeppi; together with two seculars, the duke Don Lewis Braschi,

our nephew, and the marquis Camilli Massini; who are clothed with our full powers to concert with you to promise and subscribe such conditions as we hope shall be just and reasonable; obliging ourselves, on our faith and word, to approve and ratify them in special form, in order that they may at all times be valid and inviolable. Secure in the sentiments of good-will which you have manifested towards us, we have abstained from all removal from Rome, by which you will be persuaded of our great confidence in you. We conclude with assuring you of our highest esteem, and in giving you our paternal apostolic benediction.—Given at St. Peter's of Rome, Feb. 12, 1797, the 22d year of our pontificate. "PIUS."

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In consequence of this letter a treaty of peace was immediately signed at Tolentino, on terms more tolerable than could well be expected, considering the relative situation of both parties. The pope consented to withdraw every *adhesion*, &c. given by him to the powers coalesced against France; to suffer no ships of war or privateers belonging to the enemy to enter his ports; to renounce all right to Avignon and the Venaissin, and also to the legations of Bologna, Ferrara, and the Romagna; and the French to possess all the

Peace of Tolentino.

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immunities of the most favored nation. His holiness also agreed to pay thirty millions of livres, as the price of peace, within two months; and all the manuscripts, pictures, statues, &c. stipulated for at the period of the armistice, to be immediately delivered: likewise to set at liberty all who were confined in Rome on account of their political opinions; and the city and citadel of Ancona to remain in possession of the French till a general peace.

On signing the articles, general Bonaparte wrote a polite answer to the pope's letter, in which he assured his holiness of the "esteem and perfect veneration he had for his person; hoping that the French republic would approve itself one of the truest friends of Rome."

In the progress of his march, general Bonaparte, finding himself near the celebrated mountain which comprizes the whole territory of the antient republic of St. Marino, was seized with the noble enthusiasm of displaying in the most flattering and conspicuous manner the respect which was due to this genuine remnant of the sons of freedom. The ambassador Monge, deputed by the French general, told the chiefs of this obscure but happy community, that he came in the name of the French people to assure the antient republic of St. Marino of their

Ambassy to Marino.

inviolable friendship. He entered into a concise history of the principal events of the revolution, and signified the glorious success with which their efforts had been crowned. After complimenting them for the asylum afforded to liberty within their walls, during the centuries when it seemed banished from the rest of Europe, the ambassador intimated, that if it was the wish of the government of St. Marino to enlarge the limits of their territory, the French republic would gladly embrace the occasion to give them the most solid proofs of their good will. The reply of this small but virtuous and unambitious state was such as to afford a lesson both of political and moral wisdom to all the nations of Christendom.—"We place, (said they) citizen ambassador, in the number of the most glorious epochas that have distinguished the annals of our freedom, the day of your mission to our republic. Your republic not only conquers its enemies by the force of its arms, but fills its friends with amazement at the generosity of its proceedings. The love of our liberty makes us feel the worth of the magnanimous exertions of a great people aspiring to recover their own. Those exertions have surpassed all expectation. Your nation, single against the rest of Europe, has afforded the world an astonishing example of what that energy can achieve which is pro-

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duced by the sentiment of LIBERTY.—Your army, marching in the steps of Hannibal, and surpassing by its deeds whatever is most wonderful in antiquity, led on by a hero who unites to every virtue the powers of the most distinguished genius, has cast a glance on a corner of the globe where a remnant of the sons of Liberty fled for refuge, and where is found rather the plainness of Spartan manners than the elegance of Athens. You know, citizen ambassador, that the simplicity of our customs, the deep sentiment we cherish of liberty, are the only inheritance which has been transmitted to us by our fathers: this we have been able to preserve untouched amidst the political convulsions which have taken place in the succession of many revolving ages, and which neither ambition nor hatred have been able to destroy. Return then to the hero who has sent you: Carry back to him the free homage not only of that admiration which we share with the whole world, but also of our gratitude: Tell him that the republic of St. Marino, satisfied with its mediocrity, fears to accept of his generous offer of enlarging its territory, which might, in the end, prove injurious to its liberty."

Here then is a striking and instructive instance of a community enjoying in grateful contentment their beloved and enviable free-

dom while a thousand years have rolled away, and who, satisfied with the peaceful possession of their native mountain, refuse to hearken to the most tempting offers of an enlargement of their dominion. What a contrast to the wicked and absurd policy of those kingdoms and empires which, great in riches, in extent of territory and population, place their chief glory in subjecting to their tyrannical yoke the farthest regions of the globe, whose weak and unoffending inhabitants could never have afforded the slightest pretext for inflicting upon them these atrocious injuries, and who have no knowledge of their conquerors, but in the character and capacity of oppressors, plunderers, and assassins. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

Scarcely had the peace with the pope been signed and ratified, when the attention of the French general was recalled to the northern parts of Italy, where the Austrians had again assembled in great force. General Alvinzi was now dismissed from his command, and the archduke Charles, the idol of the German soldiery, placed at the head of the Imperial armies with full powers; and the court of Vienna, after its repeated disappointments, still flattered itself with the hopes that the deliverer of the empire, the hero of Kehl, and the conqueror of Jourdain, would be able to dissolve the charm by which

Archduke Charles supersedes marshal Alvinzi.

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victory seemed bound to the car of Bonaparte. The archduke carried with him very powerful reinforcements from the banks of the Rhine; and the French government likewise detached from their forces in that quarter a very large division under general Bernadotte; so that the flower both of the Austrian and French armies were now assembled at the foot of the Noric Alps, to decide a quarrel which had begun near the shores of the German Ocean.

Since the defeat of the gallant but unfortunate Alvinzi at Rivoli, the French had occupied the right side of the Piava, from its source in the Alps to its *embouchure* in the Adriatic. The Austrians, marching from all parts, gradually formed on the opposite shore, and some skirmishes had already taken place between the advanced posts, when Bonaparte returned from the unlaurelled triumphs of the papal war to the grand scene of military operation. The divisions under Massena and Serrurier having passed the Piava, the archduke fell back on Belluno, and continued retreating till he had repassed the Tagliamento, the banks of which deep and rapid stream the Austrians had so fortified, from the mountains to the Adriatic, as to render the farther progress of the French army extremely hazardous. Here, therefore, general Bonaparte thought it expedient to pause; and, con-

Austrians entrench themselves behind the Tagliamento.

trary to his apparent custom, cautiously to deliberate before he ventured to pass this bulwark of the Austrian dominions. On the 16th of March (1797), all the necessary dispositions being made, general Bonaparte, depending upon the co-operation of general Joubert on the side of the Tyrol, and taking advantage of the lowness of the waters of the Tagliamento, in consequence of the frost which still arrested the torrents usually flowing into that river from the Glaciers and the Upper Alps, determined to make what may be regarded as one of the boldest efforts of the Italian war. General Duphot first threw himself into the river at the head of a brigade of light infantry, supported by Bernadotte, Murat, with other brave officers, and, having gained the opposite shore, the whole army gradually formed in spite of various fierce charges from the Austrian cavalry. The Austrian infantry, astonished and disconcerted, made comparatively but a feeble resistance. The village where the archduke had established his head-quarters being vigorously attacked, that prince was compelled hastily to withdraw his troops under cover of the night, and continued his march till he reached the gorges of the mountains which bound the Venetian territory; leaving part of his artillery, and the towns of Palma Nuova, Udine, and the surrounding

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Entrenchments forced.

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country, to the mercy of the conqueror. Bonaparte was not deceived in his expectations from Joubert. That officer was instructed to penetrate through the Tyrol into Carinthia, ascending up the Adige, and following the course of that river to Brixen; then to proceed to the head of the Drave. He was opposed in his progress by general Laudohn, related to the great mareschal Laudohn, over whom Joubert obtained several advantages, compelling him to retreat to Inspruck, while Joubert took possession of Brixen, where the Austrians had large magazines. Another division, under general Massena, also passing the Tagliamento near its source, continued its march among the mountains, with much difficulty from the nature of the country, and resistance from the enemy, to the sources of the Drave. The main body of the French army had by this time entered the Austrian Frioul—the garrison of Gradisca surrendering themselves prisoners of war. Trieste, the chief town of Carniola, and the whole province of Istria bordering on the Adriatic, submitted to the arms of the republic. The headquarters of the archduke were now removed to Clagenfurt, the capital of Carinthia, to which the generals Bonaparte and Massena pressed forward in different directions,—the latter defeating in his progress a large division of the

Brixen captured by the French.

Austrian army on the summit of the vast mountains which impend over the town of Tarwis. The battle was fought, according to the expression of the French commander, above the clouds,—the snow covering the ground to a great depth. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

General Joubert was at this time still entangled in the Tyrolian Alps; but, desisting from his pursuit of Laudohn, he passed the summit of the range of mountains dividing the Tyrol from the duchy of Carinthia, and, continuing his march along the Drave, joined the generals Bonaparte and Massena at Clagenfurt; whence prince Charles, at the near approach of the French, had made his farther retreat. The republicans were now in possession of all the Austrian territory on the Italian side of the Alps; of the Tyrol, of the provinces of Carniola, Carinthia, and Istria, on the German side. Having, after an unexampled series of triumphs, attained to this summit of prosperity, the French general exhibited an extraordinary instance of moderation and good policy, in making a direct overture for peace, in a letter addressed (March 31) to the archduke, and expressed in terms the most open, frank, and generous, highly deserving of historic commemoration. "Brave soldiers (says the French

General Bonaparte offers peace to the archduke.

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commander) make war, but desire peace. Has not the war lasted six years? Have we not committed evils enow against suffering humanity? —Europe, who had taken up arms against the French republic, has laid them down. Your nation alone remains, and the sixth campaign is announced under the most portentous auspices.—Is there no hope then of accommodation? Is it essential to the interests or gratifying to the passions of a nation, far removed from the theatre of war, that we should continue to murder each other? Do not imagine, gallant general, that I wish to insinuate that you cannot save your country by force of arms; but, with respect to myself, if the overture which I have now the honor to make to you could be the means of sparing the life of a single man, I should prize more highly the civic crown to which my interference would entitle me, than the melancholy glory which would result from the most brilliant military exploits." The archduke returned a polite though somewhat cool reply to this remarkable letter, importing, "that he neither conceived it his part to enter into any discussion of the principles upon which the war was carried on, nor was he furnished by the emperor with any powers to conclude a treaty of peace;"—but professing equal zeal for the

interests of suffering humanity, and assurances of his distinguished personal esteem for the French commander. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

Upon receiving this answer, general Bonaparte again put his troops in motion. On the 2d of April general Massena, with the advanced guard, attacked the archduke in the defiles between Friesach and Neumark. After a bloody conflict the Austrians retired, leaving the field covered with dead. On the 4th, another partial engagement took place at Hunsmark, where the French maintained again their wonted superiority. The French general now continued his march; and the Austrians retreating across the Muhr, the enemy took possession of the town of Judenburg in the principality of Styria, situated on that river. They were now 120 miles only from Vienna, which, by the rapid approach of the French, was thrown into the utmost consternation. Some thousands of men were employed in raising new works for the defence of the city. A general enrolment took place, in which the noble and the peasant were alike included, and precautions were taken to remove the public treasure and archives of the arch-dutchy into Hungary. The advanced posts of the French army had already left Judenburg far in the rear; and the general informed the Directory in his dispatches, "that he hoped, at

Austrians again defeated at Neumark and Hunsmark.

Alarm of the court of Vienna.

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the head of 20,000 grenadiers, to plant, in a few days, the standard of the French republic in the capital of his Imperial majesty."*

Critical situation of General Bonaparte.

But notwithstanding the flattering prospects before him, there were present to his mind considerations of great moment, which might well cause the French commander to pause in his career of victory. Intelligence was just received that the brave and hardy Tyrolese peasantry had, as on former occasions, risen in a mass, and, under the active and spirited conduct of general Laudohn, had recovered Botsen and Brixen, whence the French troops, left for the defence of the Tyrol, had been driven with loss. General Alvinzi was advancing by Fiuma

* The description so nobly drawn by Addison, in his Poem of the Campaign, of the rapid and alarming increase of the Gallic Power, appears still more applicable to the close, than the commencement of the eighteenth century:

"The haughty Gaul beheld with towering pride
His antient bounds enlarged on every side;
Pyrenes' lofty barriers were subdued,
And in the midst of his wide empire stood.
Ausonia's States, the victor to restrain,
Opposed their Alps and Appennines in vain:
Nor found themselves with strength of rocks immur'd,
Behind their everlasting hills secur'd.
The rising Danube its long race began,
And half its course thro' the new conquests ran.
Amaz'd, and anxious for her sovereigns' fates,
Germania trembled thro' her hundred states."

and Trieste into the Frioul, and a great army was gradually forming in the rear of the French. There was also good reason to believe that the republic of Venice, which had been ever secretly inimical to France, waited only a favorable opportunity of joining the Austrians avowedly and openly. The conquering army, though full of spirit and courage, was much diminished in number, destitute of heavy artillery for sieges, and utterly incompetent to retain possession of the numerous provinces it had subdued. General Bonaparte, in the height of his successes, began to feel that he was in the midst of an enemy's country; and, as he advanced, the peasantry of Carinthia and Carniola would, in all probability, follow the example of the Tyrolians—the different proclamations of liberty which he had published from time to time having produced no sensible effect. His communication with France, and even with Italy, separated as that country was now from him by a tremendous barrier of mountains, must be given up. He had no expectation of support from any quarter; and the army he commanded was manifestly unequal to the mighty task of subverting the Austrian empire. Even should he succeed in the doubtful enterprize of making himself master of Vienna, defended as it still was by the lofty Styrian hills

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rising from the banks of the Muhr, and by a brave and patriotic army commanded by a gallant prince, beloved and revered by his country, formidable notwithstanding his losses, and whose defeats were not like those of Arcole and Rivoli, he would even then see before him an almost interminable length of territory;—to the north, Bohemia; to the south, Hungary; and, to the east, the vast provinces of Austrian Poland. Armies would rise up on every side; his forces would be harassed, diminished and dispirited, by incessant action; and he might at last deem himself fortunate to escape, like his celebrated predecessor, mareschal Belleisle, after penetrating into the centre of the Austrian dominions, with the shattered remnant of his troops, back into his own country. In this state of things it was no doubt with great satisfaction that general Bonaparte received, through the medium of general Bellegarde, a dispatch from the court of Vienna, proposing a suspension of arms for ten days. To this proposition he immediately acceded; and within that term preliminaries of peace were signed (April 18, 1797) at Leoben in Styria.

Preliminaries of peace signed at Leoben.

The articles of this famous treaty contained a direct cession of the Austrian Netherlands to France; they allowed the free navigation of the Rhine, and recognized the independence of the

newly erected Italian republics. Thus was England alone, of all the powers engaged in the confederacy against France, left to carry on that ruinous, unjust, and hopeless contest.* BOOK XXIII. 1797.

A manifesto, published April 9, pending the negotiation, was addressed from Leoben, by general Bonaparte, to the doge and senate of Venice, complaining of the hostile disposition which that government had uniformly shewn towards the French, and demanding instant satisfaction for the injuries they had sustained. It was particularly alleged against them, "that marshal Beaulieu had been received in their territory with every mark of kindness after his successive defeats in the campaign of 1796, and even suffered to take possession of the fortress of Peschiera on the Lake of Guarda. The repeated disasters of the Austrians at length, it is asserted, awakened the Venetian senate from its dream of the eventual success of the coalition: it was perceived that general Bonaparte would not be made the dupe of their insidious policy; Manifesto of general Bonaparte against the republic of Venice.

* "While the armies and navies of England have been given to Mr. Pitt (says a celebrated writer) without restriction, and its treasures poured out at his feet, his unprosperous *prudence* has produced all the effects of the blindest temerity, and finally left this country nothing but her own naked force to oppose the imminent danger of falling under the dominion of France."

BURKE's '*Third Letter.*'

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and dreading to be involved in the general destruction which threatened the remaining despotic governments of Italy, the senate sought with eagerness some favorable opportunity of joining their forces with those of the emperor for the extermination of the invaders. The retreat of the archduke, and the march of the French towards the capital of the Austrian dominions, seemed to be the precise moment when, without risk or danger, they might aim a decisive blow. General Bonaparte was nevertheless well informed of the perfidious intentions of the senate, but hoped that the forces which he had left in Lombardy, under General Augereau, would be sufficient to over-awe the Venetian government. But when the news arrived of general Laudohn's progress in the Tyrol, and also of general Alvinzi's march into Italy, by Carniola, in the rear of the French, the report was universally circulated that the French were on the point of laying down their arms, and that nothing was wanting to render the victory decisive but a general movement and co-operation on the part of the loyal subjects of the Venetian government. The influence of the priests and nobles was sufficient to blow into a flame the insurrection which they had been secretly preparing. A crusade against the French, as regicides and atheists, was publicly preached by the

priests as a sacred duty; the insurgents, to the amount of 40,000, were soon equipped, and formed into regiments under the direction of regular officers employed in the service of the state; and the French were attacked at Vicenza, Padua, Verona, &c.—and at the last of these places, on the second festival of Easter, the ringing of the bell was the signal to commence the new Sicilian vespers by assassinating all the French in that city, without excepting even the sick and wounded in the hospitals, who, it is affirmed, were thrown into the Adige pierced with a thousand stabs from stilettos."—Such is the substance of the heavy accusations brought by the French general against the Venetian state. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

Not knowing, or probably suspecting, how speedily a pacification was likely to take place between France and the emperor, the tenor of the answer returned by the doge was cold and evasive. He pretended indeed, "that the members of government were overwhelmed with affliction at the receipt of general Bonaparte's letter;" and asserted, "that the senate had ever entertained the firmest resolution of maintaining peace with the French republic; alleging, that though some disorders inseparable from popular insurrections might have happened, the government had taken the necessary measures to appease them." It must be remarked that

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general Laudohn, after expelling the French from the Tyrol, was now descending from the mountains, down the banks of the Adige, to join the numerous levies of insurgents in that quarter—general Augereau being utterly unable to oppose his progress. General Alvinzi also was rapidly advancing on the opposite side, and had actually passed the defiles leading to the Frioul: so that the Venetian government conceived general Bonaparte to be in a most hazardous situation, and regarded all Lombardy as once more in possession of the Austrians.

Subversion of the Venetian government.

Immediately on signing the preliminaries of Leoben, general Bonaparte evacuated the Austrian territory; and early in May, from his headquarters at Palma Nuova, he published a formal declaration of war against Venice, the government of which, amazed and confounded at the threat it contained, "to trample in the dust the lion of St. Mark," offered no resistance. On the 12th of May the French army entered the city of Venice, which, from the foundation of the republic, a period of 1,300 years, had never before submitted to a foreign yoke. The Senate and Council of Ten were forthwith abolished, and the three state inquisitors put under arrest. A provisional administration was appointed, and a municipality of fifty members chosen under the control of six commissioners nominated

by the French general. Thus was an antient and execrable tyranny, falsely styling itself a republic, but which was in reality an oligarchy of the most odious kind, suddenly and completely annihilated, to the astonishment of the world; but, as soon appeared, from motives allowing little scope for praise to the haughty subverters of it. The capture of Venice put the French in possession of a prize highly important to the republic, viz. the shipping in the port, with the naval and military stores contained in the magazines and arsenals of that great city. The Venetian islands in the Adriatic and Archipelago, with her Dalmatian and Istrian provinces, shared the fortunes of the parent state.

Subversion of the government of Genoa.

The fall of Genoa succeeded almost immediately that of Venice. From the days of Andrew Doria, a popular or democratic party has always subsisted in the Genoese republic. This party, from the extraordinary successes, and no doubt from the secret encouragement of the French, had recently become very formidable to the government; and no sooner was the intelligence received of the subversion of the Venetian republic, than a general insurrection broke out, which, threatening the safety of the ducal palace, compelled the grand council to declare the patrician government dissolved. A provi-

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sional administration was then appointed, which, under the avowed influence of the French general, was soon after superseded by a government founded on the model of the republic of France; with whom the Genoese, now assuming the appellation of the Ligurian Republic, concluded a treaty of dependence, under the name of amity. Nearly at this period the Cispadane and Transpadane governments were united by general Bonaparte, under the name of the Cisalpine Republic, which also adopted the French model as their pattern and exemplar.

Foundation of the Cisalpine Republic.

Operations on the Rhine.

The events which passed during this short campaign on the Rhine merit no very distinct notice. Early in the spring the army of the Sambre and Meuse, now commanded by general Hoche, passed the Rhine at Dusseldorf, and attacked the Austrian entrenchments on the banks of the Lahn with considerable success, pursuing the enemy to the gates of Frankfort; general Werneck, who commanded, being unable to withstand the superior force brought against him. In the mean time general Moreau passed the same river in the vicinity of Strasburg, not without some loss from the Austrian artillery. But when the whole army had reached the German shore a fierce and bloody conflict ensued, in which the Austrians were repulsed, and the fort of Kehl, which was still lying in ruins, with

the park of artillery, and several thousand prisoners, fell into the hands of the republicans. The Austrians retreated precipitately towards the Danube, whither general Moreau was preparing to follow them, when the welcome news arrived of the signing of the preliminaries of peace by the archduke and general Bonaparte.

The naval transactions of the present year were, as well as the military events, very important and memorable. After all the pompous threats of invasion, it excited however laughter rather than alarm, to be officially apprized that a small French squadron, consisting of two frigates and two sloops, had cast anchor in the bay of Cardigan, where, on the 23d of February, they disembarked about 1500 men, with a proportionable quantity of arms and ammunition, but without field-pieces. Great exertions being made by the gentlemen of the vicinity, before night about 700 men, militia, fencibles, or yeomen cavalry, were collected in this rude and unfrequented spot, together with great numbers of the peasantry armed with scythes and pitchforks. Of this party lord Cawdor assumed the command; and, on approaching the enemy, he received a letter, signed "Tate, Chef de Brigade," intimating that the circumstances under which the body of French troops under his command were landed, having rendered it

Descent of the French on the coast of Wales or Welsh coast.

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unnecessary to attempt any military operation, he proposed a capitulation. This proposal being accepted, about noon on the succeeding day they laid down their arms, and surrendered prisoners of war. The two frigates also were captured on their return to Brest, and the whole expedition proved as unfortunate in the execution as it was unaccountable in the design.

For many months past the fleets of France, Spain, and Holland, had been blocked up in their harbours by the British squadrons. At length, however, the Spanish fleet, commanded by Don Joseph de Cordova, depending on its great superiority of force, left the port of Carthagena (February 4th, 1797), and passed the rock of Gibraltar on the following day. Soon after they had cleared the Strait this fleet was descried by the Niger frigate, which immediately transmitted the intelligence to admiral sir John Jervis, an officer of distinguished merit, who commanded on that station. On the night of the 13th they approached so near, that their signal guns were distinctly heard. "In this situation" the admiral, to use his own words, "anxiously awaited the day;" when the Spanish fleet was found to consist of no less than twenty-seven sail of the line, whereas that of the British amounted to no more than fifteen. Far from thinking, in these circumstances, of a retreat, the admiral

Victory obtained over the Spanish fleet by sir John Jervis.

" bore down with a press of sail upon the enemy before they had time to connect and form a regular order of battle. Such a moment (says the gallant commander, in his official account) was not to be lost; and, confident in the skill, valor, and discipline, of the officers and men I had the happiness to command, and judging that the honor of his majesty's arms, and the circumstances of the war in these seas, required a considerable degree of enterprize, I felt myself justified in departing from the regular system; and, passing through their fleet in a line formed with the utmost celerity, tacked, and thereby separated one-third from the main body, after a partial cannonade, which prevented their rejunction till the evening; and by the very great exertions of the ships which had the good fortune to arrive up with the enemy on the larboard tack, the Salvadore del Mundo, and San Josef, of 112 guns each, the San Nicholas of 80, and the San Isidro of 74, were captured, and the action ceased about five o'clock in the evening," when the Spaniards made in great confusion for the harbour of Cadiz. It was computed that the loss of the enemy in this engagement, so remarkable for the extraordinary degree of science exhibited in the manœuvres of the English admiral, could not fall short of 6,000 men, including the killed, wounded, and prisoners, while that of

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the British did not exceed 300, eighty of whom belonged to the crew of the Captain, a third rate, commanded by commodore Nelson, who, notwithstanding the vast disparity of force, attacked with the utmost fury the flag-ship of the Spanish admiral, La Santissima Trinidada of 136 guns. He was most gallantly supported by the captains Trowbridge and Frederick in the Culloden and the Blenheim, who lost between them no less than 118 men; so that the whole pressure of the action rested on these three ships, chiefly from the noble eagerness which they displayed to compel the Spanish admiral to strike his flag; but, though reduced to a wreck, Don Cordova appeared determined to sink rather than submit. The honors of the peerage were most deservedly bestowed upon the admiral in reward of his services, and the title of lord St. Vincent commemorated the place near which the battle was fought.

Unsuccessful attack on the Isle of Teneriffe.

The laurels which this gallant commander acquired on this occasion were unfortunately somewhat tarnished by an injudicious attempt made, on very fallacious intelligence, upon the town of Santa Cruz, in the island of Teneriffe. On the 15th of July, commodore, now admiral, Nelson, arrived before that port with a squadron of seven ships of war; from which a thousand men, under captain Trowbridge, were landed, who took

possession of the town, not, however, without considerable resistance; but found themselves utterly unequal to the attack of the fort, the strength of which, as well as of the military force of the island, now assembling, was far greater than they had been led to expect. Preparing therefore for a retreat, they had the misfortune to learn that the boats were stoven by the violence of the surge on the beach. In this situation they were summoned by the Spanish commandant to surrender; but this the gallant Trowbridge disdainfully rejected, saying "he would not capitulate as long as he had a man left alive." On which the Spaniard informed the captain, by a polite message, that, to spare the effusion of human blood, he, and what remained of his men, were at liberty to return to their ships—not only providing boats for the purpose, but, as soon as the convention was signed, generously furnishing them with supplies of biscuit and wine. The loss of lives in this wild attempt was equal to that sustained in the battle off Cape St. Vincent. Admiral Nelson himself lost his right arm by a cannon-ball, two captains were killed, and a third wounded. And it is hard to say by what figure of speech lord St. Vincent, in his official account of this disaster, could think himself authorized to affirm, "that, although the enterprize had not succeeded, his

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majesty's arms had acquired a very great degree of lustre."

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Capture of Trinidad.

Early in the present year an expedition sailed from Port Royal in Martinico, under the command of sir Ralph Abercrombie and admiral Harvey, for the Spanish island of Trinidad. On approaching the gulf of Paria, a Spanish squadron of four ships of the line and one frigate was discovered lying at anchor. The preparations made for an attack were, however, anticipated by the Spaniards themselves, who set fire to their ships in the middle of the night. One line-of-battle ship only escaped the conflagration, and fell into the hands of the English; and the next day (February the 18th) a capitulation was signed by the governor for the whole of that valuable colony, the garrison being made prisoners of war.

Failure at Porto Rico.

Encouraged by this success, an attempt was made by the same commanders, in the month of April following, on the large and important island of Porto Rico. But here they found themselves no less deceived in their calculations than lord St. Vincent at Teneriffe. After disembarking their troops, and approaching the town, it was found far too strong, in its natural and artificial defences, to be carried by a *coup de main*; and, not being in a condition to undertake a regular siege, they contented themselves

with a bombardment, which producing no effect, the troops re-embarked with the loss of 200 men, without adding, in any respect, "to the lustre of his majesty's arms." 1797.

Great preparations had been making for many months in the Dutch ports, as was believed, with the intention of co-operating with the French in a second invasion of Ireland, at a period far more critical than the first. But the fleet, when completely equipped, had been long blocked up in the Texel by admiral Duncan, who commanded a powerful squadron in those seas. In the beginning of October the British commander quitted his station, and retired to Yarmouth Roads to refit: on which a peremptory order was issued by the Dutch government to admiral De Winter, the commander, to stand to sea. Admiral Duncan, having very early notice of this movement, got under weigh with his squadron, consisting of sixteen sail of the line, with the utmost expedition; and, on the morning of the 11th, came in sight of the Dutch fleet, consisting of seventeen sail of the line, but of inferior size to the British. Shortening sail in order to connect the fleet, he saw the land, between Camperdown and Egmont, three leagues to leeward of the enemy; and finding there was no time to be lost, he threw out the signal to engage to leeward, and break the enemy's line. By this bold

Victory over the Dutch fleet by Admiral Duncan.

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manœuvre, regardless of the danger of a *lee-shore*, he prevented the retreat of De Winter, who, finding a battle inevitable, engaged with the utmost bravery. Unfortunately for him, admiral Story, who commanded in the centre, sheered off with the greater part of his division at the commencement of the action, entering the Texel the next day wholly uninjured. After this base desertion the Dutch were manifestly overpowered by superior force. Vice-admiral Onslow, who began the attack, distinguished himself most gallantly; and admiral Duncan was seen in the thickest of the action, in which, unlike the engagement off Cape St. Vincent, every ship found full and arduous employment—the Dutch fighting with a degree of courage which bordered upon desperation. Admiral De Winter struck, a mere wreck, to the Venerable, admiral Duncan's own ship. The vice-admiral Reintjies also surrendered to admiral Onslow; and the whole fleet would probably have been captured, but, under favor of the night, two or three vessels escaped into the Texel. The ships taken were ten of the line and two frigates. One of the former, the Delft of 56 guns, sunk within sight of the British coast. A more bloody conflict has seldom been fought. Nine ships of the British fleet lost more than 700 men, but this was little to the carnage which took place amongst

the Dutch, of whom 500 were killed and wounded on board the admiral and vice-admiral only. The battle was fought so near the shore, that every manœuvre might be distinctly seen; and the whole coast, for many miles, was crowded with thousands of spectators—the melancholy witnesses of the great disaster which had befallen their country from a power which professed to enter into the present war chiefly with a view to their protection. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

Great and universal rejoicings were made throughout England for this victory, which was as important as it was glorious; and which produced a much greater sensation than any event which had happened since the triumph of lord Howe over the French. For although the victory of lord St. Vincent was admired and celebrated by professional men as a most brilliant and scientific display of nautical skill, neither was it so decisive as the present, nor attended with the same great and beneficial consequences. The Dutch hero De Winter received, on his arrival in England, from the attentions of a generous enemy, every consolation that the magnitude of his misfortune admitted. The British admiral, immediately on his return, was created viscount Duncan of Camperdown, in allusion to that part of the coast of Holland near which this memorable battle was fought.

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1797. Interior state of France.

The extreme absurdity of the new republican constitution of France, which, as it were, established in the same government two clashing and hostile authorities, very early displayed itself *. From the very origin of it, in 1795, acrimonious contentions had taken place upon subjects of the utmost importance between the executive and legislative powers; and the great legislative council of Five Hundred seemed well disposed gradually to absorb all the political functions of the Directory into their own vortex. The executive power was manifestly destitute of the effective means of maintaining its constitutional authority. The committees of the legislative council were every thing; the ministers of state appointed by the Executive Directory were nothing. So far back as the beginning of December 1796, the Directory had sent a message to the council, stating the ex-

* Nothing, it has been remarked, escapes the sagacity of SHAKSPEARE.—In his historic drama of Coriolanus, he very forcibly expresses the mischief and absurdity of a form of government which permits this political solecism of *Imperium in imperio.*

"They choose their magistrate!—and my soul aches
To know, when two authorities are up,
Neither supreme, how soon confusion
May enter 'twixt the gap of both, and take
The one by th' other." ACT III.

treme financial distresses of the state, and recommending certain remedial measures as absolutely necessary to be immediately adopted. This message being referred to the committee of finances, M. Camus, the president, reported "that the alarming and desperate state of the republic existed only in the message; that a severe œconomy would restore the equilibrium of receipt and expenditure; and that the errors contained in the statement were equalled only by the imprudence of the Directory in making them public." This language, so improper to be held from one branch of the same government to another, was the infallible omen of future and alarming dissensions.

Royalist conspiracy against the government.

On the 31st of January, 1797, a message was transmitted by the Directory to the council of Five Hundred, announcing the discovery of a royalist conspiracy. It appeared on the evidence of Ramel, commandant of the national guard, and others, that the plan of a counter-revolution had been communicated to them by Dunan, Brotier, &c. to be effected by the assistance of England. The terrorists and Jacobins were to be engaged as associates in this conspiracy, if it should be found the royalists could not do without them. In the écritoire of Brotier were contained several papers, dated at Verona, with the signature of Louis XVIII.; and

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about the chevalier Dunan, who had been lately in England, was found a letter from Mr. Windham, secretary at war, in which he "begs him to be persuaded that it is not his fault that nothing is decided respecting the sending of funds for other parties of the royalists."

The conspirators engaged in this crude and unintelligible plot were referred to a military tribunal, who condemned Dunan and Brotier to death, as convicted of the crime of enlisting men for the enemy, and others of them to different terms of imprisonment—the sentence of the two chief conspirators being also subsequently mitigated to the same punishment for a period of ten years.

On the 15th of March a message was sent to the council, "that the Directory found the government too weak to contend against the plots of royalism and anarchy; that the republic was but a problem, and that the audacity of its enemies was such that it might almost be permitted to doubt whether it had any real existence; and recommending the imposition of a new oath of fidelity to the constitution, and of hatred to royalism and anarchy, upon the electors, previous to the choice of the new third." This was coldly received by the council, and the clause of fidelity only agreed to—that of hatred to royalism and anarchy being silently waved.

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Formidable opposition to the Directory in the councils.

On the 20th of May the members of the new third took their seats in the two councils, and from this time the opposition to the Directory became very formidable. Amongst the number elected were the generals Pichegru and Jourdain, and the famous Barrère, whose name was heard with marks of indignation; but, when that of Pichegru was announced, the whole assembly rose in honor of the gallant commander who had rendered such eminent services to his country. While Barrère was rejected as an outlaw, general Pichegru was unanimously chosen president; the same distinction being conferred upon Barbé Marbois in the senate, or council of elders. This augured ill to the Directory, both of them decidedly favoring the secret views of opposition.

Immediately previous to the meeting of the councils, a vacancy was declared in the Executive board, Le Tourneur drawing the lot which disrobed him of the directorial purple. Barthélemi, who had been succesfully engaged for two years past at Basle in negotiating with the enemies of the republic, was unanimously chosen to the office of director, though known to be of the anti-directorial party. Carnot also maintained a good understanding with the same faction, whose ultimate designs yet remain enveloped in much obscurity. From this period almost

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every measure proposed by the Directory was opposed, thwarted, and treated with the most studied marks of disrespect and contempt. The majority of the directors, Reubel, Lepeaux, and Barras, were men who neither displayed great talents for government, nor were reputed to possess great virtues as individuals; but they were men of daring courage and little scrupulosity, and who were secretly but firmly resolved not tamely to submit to the measures apparently meditated by their enemies against them.

On the 14th of June, Desmolières made a celebrated report in the name of the committee of finance, which concluded with a set of resolutions calculated to transfer the entire authority, hitherto exercised by the Directory, over the public treasury, to the committee. The council of elders, who perceived, doubtless, that this would render them, as well as the Directory, cyphers, put their negative upon this decree. On the 23d of June, Dumolard proposed a committee to examine the external relations of the French nation; and complained greatly of the disturbance given, under the sanction of the Directory, to the Venetian, Genoese, and Helvetic republics—the conduct, not of the Directory merely, but of Bonaparte himself, being very severely scrutinized. Repeated complaints were made by the Directory to the council of the seditious

conduct of the emigrant priests, who now, under protection of a legislative provision in their favor, returned in great numbers from their exile; and whom they represented as every-where disturbers of the public peace; and proposed restraining laws, which were treated by the council with contemptuous disregard. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

The city of Lyons being declared by the Directory, in consequence of new insurrections and disorders amongst the inhabitants, in a state of siege, the council took great umbrage at this, and a resolution passed, on the motion of general Jourdain, "that such power should only be exercised in virtue of a decree of the legislative body." On the removal of Benezech, minister for home affairs, and Cochon, minister of police, who were supposed to favour the opposing, and as they were at this time deemed, the rising, party in the council, fresh and violent murmurs were excited; and on the motion of Camille Jourdain, a vote passed to require of the Directory a report of the present situation of the republic. Barras being the director most obnoxious, an attempt was made to deprive him of his dignity, by making it a question whether he was of the age specified by law on entering upon his office. But this director affirming that he was precisely forty at the time of his election,

BOOK XXIII. and no one being able to prove the contrary, the scheme proved abortive.

1797. On the 20th of July, the generals Pichegru and Willot presented a plan for the re-organization of the national guard. The leading feature of it was to deprive the Directory of the right of nominating the officers. This was adopted, and passed into a decree. About the same time the council received intelligence that a detachment of the army, which was to embark at Brest, had, in their march, passed through Ferte Alais, eleven leagues distant from Paris; whereas the Constitutional Act prohibited all troops from coming within twelve leagues of that city. This threw the council into a flame; and, although the order of march was proved to be written at Aix-la-Chapelle, by general Richepanse, who declared himself ignorant of his having violated the constitutional limits of the act, and, moreover, that he did not even know of the existence of any such prohibition, they were by no means satisfied, and several angry resolutions were passed upon this occasion, calculated to throw odium upon the executive government. An addition was made to the military guard of the council, and the precise limits of the constitutional radius around Paris were ascertained by the erection of pillars.

The political horizon of the metropolis was growing every day more dark and portentous. The news of the contest between the executive and legislative branches of the government had reached the armies, and been echoed back in addresses to the Directory, promising them support in this conflict against their enemies. On the anniversary of the 14th of July, general Bonaparte issued a declaration, informing his brave soldiers, "that the country was menaced with new dangers from the enemies of government within. Let us swear (said he) by the manes of those who have fallen by our side in the cause of liberty—let us swear on the colours we have newly gained—implacable war to the enemies of the republic, and of the constitution!" The armies of Moreau and Hoche shewed no less zeal in the cause of the Directory, which they conceived to be that of the constitution. These addresses were justly the subject of great alarm to the council, and messages were sent to the Directory, to inquire into this infraction of the constitution, in permitting the deliberations of an armed body, and in receiving addresses from them: also a resolution passed declaring every assemblage of soldiers, convened for the purpose of deliberation, criminal, and the promoters of such assemblies liable to punishment. Things were now come to a cri-

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sis; and, though no one could tell how the contest would end, a great political explosion was universally expected; and the majority of the Directory not being—conformably to the wise policy of the English constitution, respecting the executive power—exempted from personal responsibility, were urged, by the best-founded apprehensions for their own safety, to the most desperate and despotic measures.

The opposition in the council manifestly proceeded from a combination of causes, calculated to produce, upon the whole, a great effect, though, to all appearance, radically deficient in harmony of design or unity of object.

1st. The constitution itself contained, in its original structure, the *stamina* of perpetual discord, as furnishing the legislative council with irresistible motives to the unconstitutional extension of their powers, and, moreover, with the political means of gratifying whatever their boldest ambition could lead them to attempt.

2dly. A considerable proportion of the council consisted of terrorists, who still sighed for the establishment of the democratic constitution of 1793, and who watched with eagerness every opportunity of lessening the credit, and finally of subverting the authority, of the existing government.

3dly. Another class of the members, but in-

ferior in number, consisted of royalists—very few probably of the old stamp, but real friends of rational liberty, who saw no likelihood of a firm settlement but in the restoration of the monarchy, on the principles of the constitution established by the National Assembly in 1789. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

4thly. A fourth class professed and probably entertained a firm attachment to the existing constitution; but were thrown into the arms of the opposition by their own observation of the incapacity, the corruption, and mismanagement, which pervaded every branch and department of the executive government.

These parties making occasional and mutual concessions to each other for the sake of maintaining their joint superiority, many resolutions, seemingly inconsistent in themselves, but equally disagreeable to the Directory, were the necessary result—some of them highly jacobinical, and others no less favorable to royalism. Under all these discouragements and disadvantages, the Directory possessed one formidable prerogative, which, when put in the balance, infinitely outweighed them all—*viz.* the command of the immense military force, foreign and domestic, of the republic, whose confidence and regard they had most assiduously cultivated. Embold-

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ened by the late addresses from the different armies, they now determined effectually to crush all opposition, by the complete destruction of their opponents. General Augereau, a bold and active officer, had been sent from Italy by Bonaparte, under the pretext of conveying some stands of colours, taken from the enemy, to the Directory, who entrusted to him the execution of their project. The executive government, which had hitherto held conciliatory language, now threw off the mask, on a day of public audience, and declared, by the mouth of the president, "that the eternal enemies of French liberty were redoubling in vain their efforts to overturn it; calling in for this purpose bands of fanatics and royalists"—alluding to the recent relaxation of the laws against refractory priests and emigrants: "but with these enemies of the republic (the president said) the Directory would make no compromise; they would suffer themselves neither to be seduced nor affrighted; nor would they acknowledge any authorities but such as the constitution traced out; and neither the number nor the *species* of their enemies should cause in them any dismay *."

* *Vide* Answer of the president to the addresses of the Cisalpine ambassador and general Bernadotte, on the presentation of standards, &c. from Italy.

This was the signal of hostility; and the members of opposition, who had thrown out such haughty menaces against the Directory, were now, for the first time, awakened to a sense of their own danger. Early on the morning of the 18th of Fructidor (4th of September, 1797), the alarm-guns were fired by order of the majority of the Directory; for Barthélemi, refusing to concur in these measures, was put under arrest, while Carnot effected his escape. General Augereau at the same time received his instructions to surround the hall of the councils with a military force. This task he performed with consummate courage and address. First repairing to the barracks of the legislative guard, he assured them that he came only to preserve the constitution, and to save the republic from a conspiracy of royalists. He was answered by the soldiers with shouts of *Vive la République!* and they declared their readiness, in contempt of the expostulations and defiance of the threats of Ramel their commander, to obey his orders, and follow him. Thus reinforced, Augereau entered the hall, where he found the chiefs of the opposition sitting in council, and tardily deliberating on the steps proper to be taken by them in this emergency. With his own hand, Augereau seized upon general Pichegru, so lately the terror of Europe, and the arbiter of the fate of na-

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tions,—ordering eighteen others of the members present to be arrested, amongst whom were Boissy d'Anglas, Bourdon de l'Oise, Dumolard, Rovère, Willot, and other distinguished characters. The conspirators, as they were called, were committed to the Temple, the halls shut up, and seals affixed to the doors by Augereau.

A proclamation was immediately published, to calm the minds of the people, and announcing "that, by the *vigilance* of the government, those dark manœuvres were detected and overthrown which had for a whole year shaken the foundations of the republic, and which were preparing the way for a new and most horrible attack of royalism, which aimed at no less than the massacre of the Directory and of the deputies faithful to the people;—that the Directory was about to lay before the nation the authentic documents which it had collected concerning this deep and dangerous conspiracy." To the council of Five Hundred, now summoned to meet at the Odeon, formerly a public theatre in the Fauxbourg St. Germaine, the Directory declared "that they had been forced to the measures recently taken."—"If (said they) the executive power had withheld itself from action one day longer, the republic would have been delivered up to its enemies—the conduct of the

Directory was marked out by the instant necessity of being before-hand with these conspirators, who wished to deprive the French of the fruit of their triumphs, and to make this magnanimous nation bow at the feet of the kings it has subdued." BOOK XXIII. 1797.

On the next day a still more alarming message was sent from the Directory to the council. "The moment (say they) is decisive; if you allow it to pass by, if you hesitate on the measures to be taken, if you put off your determination for an instant, all will be lost—both you and the republic. You are at the brink of a volcano—it is about to swallow you up; to-morrow will be too late. You are placed in an unprecedented predicament—ordinary rules cannot apply to so extraordinary a case. What misconceived pity would place the fate of a few individuals in balance with that of the republic!" After this prologue to the tragi-comic drama preparing to be acted, a committee of safety, consisting of five persons, being chosen, Boulay de la Meurthe, the reporter, ascended the tribune, and made a long oration, to prove "that the measures pursued by the opposition-party in the council could have no other object than the restoration of royalism. *Without doubt* (said he) an ordinary tribunal would declare the conspiracy real, and punish the authors. But

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let us declare to France, that not a drop of blood shall be shed,—that the scaffold of terror shall not be erected anew."

Under this specious pretence of lenity, therefore, he proposed the plan of a decree, according to which, 1st. A great number of the late elections in the month of Floreal, with others to the judicial tribunals, were declared either valid or invalid, as suited the purpose of the Directory. 2dly. About sixty members of the two councils, and twelve other persons, had, without any trial or even examination, the sentence of *deportation* passed upon them, to such place as the Directory should determine. Amongst these were the two directors, Carnot and Barthélemi; the ex-minister Cochon; the generals Pichegru, Willot, Ramel, and Miranda; with Boissy d'Anglas, Bourdon de l'Oise, Dumolard, Pastoret, Vaublanc, and many other persons of eminence, whose attachment to the cause of liberty and the republic there appeared no just ground to doubt. 3dly. All individuals whose names are inscribed upon the list of emigrants, and not definitively erased, shall quit the territories of the republic in fifteen days. 4thly. Every society professing principles hostile to the constitution of the third year shall be shut up.—All which passed both councils with the greatest unanimity.

On the 20th Fructidor, general Jourdain, who had made in good time his peace with the Directory, moved for the nomination of proper persons to succeed the directors Carnot and Barthélemi. Out of the several lists presented to them, the council of elders chose François de Neufchâteau, and Merlin, minister of the home department. Thus was the authority of the Directory established at the expense only of law, justice, equity, and the constitution; and there is reason to believe that they regarded the victory as cheaply gained.

After a short interval the directors laid before the councils and the public the justificatory proofs, such as they were, of the conspiracy; which they claimed the merit of extinguishing by their patriotic vigilance, when on the eve of a most horrible explosion. The documents in question have been branded as forgeries of the Directory; but if they scrupled not to forge, they would certainly have invented what was more to their purpose. By far the most remarkable of these was a paper, the genuineness of which was attested by the generals Bonaparte and Berthier, purporting to be minutes of a conversation held by M. d'Entragues, an agent of Louis XVIII. at Venice, with the count Montgaillard, an emigrant of distinction, relative to the designs, at all times carrying on

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with more or less activity, for the effecting a counter-revolution. In this paper it is asserted, that Montgaillard finding Pichegru disposed to listen to propositions, the count, in the name of Louis XVIII. and the prince of Condé, offered him the rank of mareschal of France, the red ribband, the government of Alsace, &c. &c.; requiring of him, in return, to join his army to that of the prince of Condé, and, delivering up the fortress of Huningue, to march forthwith to Paris. With this proposal Pichegru refused to comply, stating, "that, unwilling to make the third volume to La Fayette and Dumouriez, he would do nothing rashly."—He affirmed, nevertheless, "that his means were great and sure; that they had their roots not only in his army, but at Paris, in the convention, in the departments, in the armies of the generals his colleagues, who thought, like himself, that the present system must finish; that France could not exist as a republic; that there must be a king; and *that* king Louis XVIII." The plan which he proposed, after putting the strong places on the frontier in the hands of his most confidential officers, was, on a day concerted, "to proclaim the king, to hoist the white standard, and to unite his army with those of WURMSER and Condé; and then to commence his march to Paris." This proposal was declined by the prince of

Condé, probably because general Wurmser had no authority thus to risk his army; but, according to the author of the Minutes, because the prince, equally stupid and proud, thought himself sure of effecting the counter-revolution another way, and would not share the glory of it with the Austrian general. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

Many other papers were produced, which had been transmitted by general Moreau to the Directory, containing strong corroborative evidence, that a plot of a very extensive nature was going forward, in which many persons of great eminence were involved, and general Pichegru very deeply: and it was now apparent why that celebrated officer was removed from his command, in the height of his successes. The cloud of mystery, nevertheless, which originally hung over this transaction, time has not entirely dispelled:—the object of the Directory was to confound, and not to discriminate; and, under the pretext and cover of an horrible plot, partly real, partly pretended, supported by proofs not adequate to the legal crimination, perhaps, of any individual, but sufficient to agitate and terrify the public mind, to implicate all their enemies, Jacobins, royalists, and patriots, in one common ruin. Thus were the two councils purged of disaffection and disloyalty; and, being now at leisure to consider farther the nature

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and extent of the danger so recently and happily surmounted, they declared "that one of the measures of the late conspirators was to deprive the executive power of the moral and constitutional means of carrying on its functions; to arraign every part of its conduct; and by degrees deprive it of each of its prerogatives, and thus bring it to its dissolution." To guard against the return of a peril so dreadful—exclusive of various other legislative regulations, by one of which the operations of the primary assemblies in no less than forty-nine departments were declared null and void—they subjected the *care* of the *liberty of the press*, for the term of one year, to the inspection of the police; and the liberty of speech in the councils was confined to the privilege, still generously left them, of applauding the wisdom and activity of the executive government.

Fresh attempt of the court of London to negotiate with France.

In the beginning of the month of June, lord Grenville had made, on the part of the king of Great Britain, a third effort to effect a pacification with France, by a direct application to M. de la Croix, declaring himself authorized to propose, without delay, to enter, in such manner as shall be judged most expedient, upon the discussion of the views and pretensions of each party. A polite answer was immediately returned by M. de la Croix, expressing the extreme satisfac-

tion with which the Directory would receive the overtures which should be made to it by the court of England; and Lisle was fixed upon as the place of meeting.—On the 17th of June, lord Grenville, in a well-written letter, stated, "that the powers of the ambassador would be so full as to include *every case*, and to conclude *any articles or treaties* conducive to the speedy establishment of peace, which (said his lordship) is the sole object of his mission—and informing the Directory that his majesty had made choice of *the same minister* to represent him on this as on the former occasion."—M. de la Croix, in reply, signified "the *consent* of the Directory, that the negotiation should be opened with lord Malmesbury. Another choice would, however, (said he) have appeared to the Directory to augur more favorably for the speedy conclusion of peace." This was an early step towards the creating of a misunderstanding. That the Directory had reason to except against the re-appointment of lord Malmesbury, from the disingenuous manner in which he had executed his former commission, must be allowed; that the second nomination of a man so politically obnoxious was highly impolitic, cannot be doubted; but no objection having been made by M. de la Croix, in his first letter, to that nomination, it would surely have argued more wisdom

Ld Malmesbury a second time appointed ambassador.

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and temper in the French government to have waved this invidious observation altogether. Lord Grenville, in his accustomed cold, haughty, and repulsive manner, from which he had in his last dispatch happily deviated, replied to M. de la Croix, "that lord Malmesbury will, without delay, proceed to Lisle, to enter into a negotiation with the French plenipotentiaries for the completion of a definitive treaty—the remark of the Directory, upon the choice which his majesty had thought fit to make of his plenipotentiary, being certainly of a nature not to require *any* answer*."

* "On the 30th of December, 1796," says the admirable writer so often quoted in this volume, "Mr. Pitt informed the house of commons, that the king's ambassador had been dismissed with every mark of ignominy and insult; that a studied insult, refined and matured by the French Directory, had been offered to his Britannic majesty. And then he asked, whether, after the king's minister had been ordered, in the most insulting manner, to leave the territories of France; after our propositions had been slighted, and our ambassador insulted; were we, by sending couriers to Paris, to prostrate ourselves at the feet of a stubborn and supercilious government, to do what they require, and to submit to whatever they may impose? I hope there is not a hand in his majesty's councils which would sign the proposal; that there is not a heart in this house who would sanction the measure; and that there is not an individual in the British dominions who would act as the courier."—Such language, whether true or not, may serve to inflame a popular assembly, but is not safe or justifiable in a minister of state.

Progress of the negotiation.

On the part of the Directory were nominated, as plenipotentiaries, the citizens Le Tourneur, late member of the Directorial Council, Pleville, and Maret, men of sense, moderation, and sagacity. The first dispatch of lord Malmesbury to lord Grenville is dated July the 11th, in which he mentions "that he had, in a conference with the French commissioners, on the 8th, given in the *projet* precisely as he had received it from his lordship. This the commissioners had transmitted to the Directory. But in the mean time, and till their answer arrived, M. Le Tourneur and his colleagues expressed their wishes to discuss some insulated points not referred to in the *projet*, but which were affirmed to be "INSEPARABLY CONNECTED with the general subject of peace." *First*, It was observed in the subsequent conference, "that in the preamble of the *projet* the title of King of France was used. This title (it was contended by the commissioners) could no longer be insisted on; the abo-

How can he adhere to it without perpetual war? How can he retract it without everlasting infamy? The French made no apology. They offered no reparation. Yet, in less than six months, when the minister himself had so degraded the office, that no gentleman ought to have accepted of it, the same hand was found to sign, the same heart to sanction, and the same courier to carry the message exactly to the same parties.

'*Question Stated*,' pp. 11, 12.

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which the spirit of wisdom and conciliation only could bring to a happy issue. A minister who did not see so obvious a truth clearly and distinctly was utterly unfit to be employed in a concern of such moment; and this first false step of lord Malmesbury shewed, in a striking manner, how well founded was the *presentiment* of the Directory, that the appointment of this nobleman augured ill to the success of the negotiation. Though scarcely could he allow himself, as he professes, to treat the subject seriously, he entered into a very dull and tedious harangue, to prove how consistent it was with the dignity and security of the republic to suffer this obnoxious title to be retained—quoting, unfortunately for the honor of England, the lofty titles assumed by the feeble and falling monarchs of Sardinia and Sicily, as examples *exactly* in point. The French commissioners were much more easily convinced that the security of the republic was not concerned in this discussion, than the dignity of it: and, in fact, the dignity of both nations, if national *dignity* includes, in the definition of it, *common sense*, equally required the sacrifice of this folly. After much disputation, lord Malmesbury, arguing (as he says) in vain, could not avoid taking it for reference,—leaving upon the minds of the French commissioners an impression relative to his di-

plomatic talents, the most distant in the world from that of respect and confidence. * BOOK XXIII. 1797.

"The *second* insulated point (continues lord Malmesbury) was a very material one indeed, and came upon him very unexpectedly. It was to ask a restitution of the ships taken at Toulon, or an equivalent for them." The ambassador replied, "that this claim was so perfectly unlooked for, that it was *impossible* for him to have been provided for it in his instructions; but that his own private sentiments were, that they could not have devised a step more likely to defeat the great end of their mission." His lordship said, "that he did not see where this equivalent was to be found, or how it was to be appreciated;

* Certainly the sagacious Hume did not regard this absurd and unjust assumption of title in the light which lord Malmesbury appeared so eager to place it in, if we may judge from the following quotation:—"From this period," (A. D. 1338) says that philosophical historian, "when Edward III. first took upon him the title of King of France, we may date the commencement of that great animosity which the English nation have ever since borne to the French, which has so visible an influence on all future transactions, and which has been, and continues to be, the spring of many rash and precipitate resolutions amongst them."

"When will ambition," says a late respectable historian, he might have added, when will vanity and folly "listen to the voice of reason and humanity, and permit mankind to enjoy the gifts of nature and providence in peace?"

Henry, vol. x. p. 82.

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and he trusted that this very inadmissible proposal would be withdrawn." They said it was not in their power; and one of the commissioners read from their written instructions a passage which confirmed the assertion.—As lord Malmesbury, in his several letters, is much more full in reporting his own arguments than those of his adversaries, it may, in justice to the French commissioners, be proper to state the nature of their claim fairly and explicitly. It stands thus:—"Lord Hood was admitted into Toulon, and took possession of the ships, &c. on the following condition, viz. That when peace shall be re-established in France, the ships and forts which shall have been put into the hands of the English shall be restored to the FRENCH NATION, in the same state they were in when the inventory was delivered. By treating with the republic you acknowledge the existence of a competent government, to which every restitution due to the French nation ought to be made. You cannot pretend that you hold the ships taken at Toulon as a deposit in trust for Louis XVIII. when, by making a perpetual peace with the republic, you are yourselves parties to an act which annihilates the pretensions of that person. Neither could even he have any claim to the restitution, unless he were in possession of the throne. Ships of war, magazines, &c. are national pro-

perty, not within the personal ownership of princes, much less removable with their persons: they are the fixtures of the state, which even the sovereign in possession cannot alienate from the defence or service of the country. We demand the restitution as representatives of the French nation, which you acknowledge us to be, and precisely in the terms of your own engagement *." Lord Malmesbury rejects the claim, without attempting to answer the plea; for it surely is no answer to an argument to say that you are *surprised* at it. As for its being "unlooked for," no subject was more frequently mentioned in England, or more likely to be insisted upon by France. The same thing may indeed be remarked of the first of these insulated propositions.

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"The *third* question (says lord Malmesbury) was, as to any mortgage we might have upon the Low Countries, in consequence of money lent to the emperor by Great Britain. They wished to know if any such existed; since, as they had taken the Low Countries, charged with all their incumbrances, they were to declare that they should not consider themselves bound to answer any mortgage given for money lent to the emperor for the purpose of carrying on war

* Vide 'QUESTION STATED,' p. 15, 16.

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against them. I told them, that, without replying to this question, supposing the case to exist, the exception they required should have been stated in their treaty with the emperor, and could not at all be mixed up in ours; that if they had taken the Low Countries, as they stood charged with all their incumbrances, there could be no doubt what those words meant; and that if no exception was stated in the first instance, none could be made with a retro-active effect. The French plenipotentiaries, however, were as tenacious on this point as on the other two: and as I found, to every argument I used, that they constantly opposed their instructions, I had nothing to do but to desire that they would give me a written paper, stating their three claims, in order that I might immediately transmit it to your lordship; and, on this being promised, our conference broke up."—As lord Malmesbury has entirely omitted to state the ground on which the French commissioners rested their last claim, it can only be conjectured that they actually did, as they certainly might with good reason, allege the invalidity of any mortgage-title upon the revenues of the Low Countries, granted by the emperor at a time when the countries themselves were not in his possession; and that, although the case of the English mortgage might not be in immediate contemplation at the mo-

ment when the article of cession was framed, it could never be supposed the intention of the French government to sanction so great an absurdity as to admit that the revenues of a territory actually conquered by them, could, according to any rule of equity or common sense, be mortgaged by their former possessor for the express purpose of carrying on the war against them.—Even had the claim on the part of the French been wholly arbitrary, it was not surely a point worth contending seriously about, considering the degree of estimation in which the Imperial securities were held on the London Exchange; and, by *provisionally* conceding this and the former points with cheerfulness and facility, reciprocal concessions might have been reasonably expected from France, and the negotiation would have proceeded under happy auspices.

The PROJET delivered by lord Malmesbury to the commissioners of France was founded professedly on the *status quo ante bellum*, with such exceptions as should be stipulated by specific articles of the treaty—the French engaging to procure for the House of Orange, at a general peace, an adequate compensation for the loss of their hereditary dignities. Several blanks were of course left in the *projet*, to be filled up as the negotiation went forward. The French com-

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missioners expressing their wishes that lord Malmesbury would inform them in writing in what mode he meant to propose that these blanks should be filled up, the English ambassador inserted in the 13th article, relative to Spain, the words " with the exception of Trinidad, which shall remain in full possession to his British majesty,"—adding that this was intended to balance the augmentation of power accruing to France from the acquisition of the Spanish part of St. Domingo.

In the 14th article, relative to Holland, lord Malmesbury inserted the words " with the exception of the town, fort, and establishment of the Cape of Good Hope; and of the possessions which belonged to the Dutch before the war in the island of Ceylon; and of the town and fort of Cochin, which shall be ceded to his Britannic majesty, in exchange for the town of Negapatnam, with its dependencies." In the same note lord Malmesbury signified that the positive demand of the French commissioners, of an entire restitution of the possessions belonging to France before the war, would not be an insuperable obstacle to the negotiation.

It would be great injustice not to admit—considering the number and value of the conquests made by England during the war, and, presupposing the propriety of treating Holland,

for whose defence we entered, or pretended to enter, into the war, as an enemy—that the proposals of the court of London on this occasion were very reasonable and moderate—certainly as much so as the French themselves could possibly expect. So that if the preliminary demands had been, with a good grace, complied with, the negotiation would, in all probability, have terminated speedily and happily.* But, in consequence of the pertinacious and irritating opposition of lord Malmesbury, to whom, on this occasion at least, great powers were entrusted, and on whose diplomatic address and ability every thing at this important moment depended, the negotiation suddenly assumed a most upleasant and ominous appearance.

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* It is remarkable, that a hundred and thirty years before this time, when Britain could boast of very few foreign possessions, sir William Temple, ambassador to the States General, at his first audience, declared, "that the king his master, contented with those great and powerful kingdoms which God had given him, coveted nothing from his neighbours, nor had he other thoughts or wishes beside those of the common peace and repose of Christendom." And queen Elizabeth, in one of her speeches to parliament, avowed, "that though it might be thought simplicity in her, she had not thought to advance her territories and enlarge her dominions, albeit opportunities had served her to do it." Happy, had the policy of this great princess never been departed from.

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On the 10th of July, the French plenipotentiaries delivered to lord Malmesbury a formal official note, in which they inform his lordship, "that they have the positive orders of the Directory, to require, 1st, The renunciation of the title of king of France borne by his Britannic majesty. 2d, The ministers plenipotentiary of the republic are ordered to demand the restitution of the vessels taken or destroyed at Toulon. 3d, The ministers plenipotentiary have orders to demand, and do demand, the renunciation, on the part of his Britannic majesty, of the mortgage on Belgium."

On the 13th of July, lord Grenville wrote a very remarkable letter to lord Malmesbury, in which he says, "that the preliminary demands of the French ministers have been received by the court of London *with great surprize*. On the subject of the Netherlands, as connected with the Austrian loans (says his lordship), it is conceived that any explanation between his majesty and the French government is wholly unnecessary. The loans raised in England for the service of the emperor of Germany, and guarantied by act of parliament, here rest, as your lordship will perceive by the annexed copy of the convention on that subject, upon the security of all the hereditary dominions of his Imperial majesty. They do not seem in any manner

to come under the description contained in the sixth article of the preliminaries between Austria and France, respecting mortgages upon the soil of the Netherlands, on which ground alone France could have any pretence to *interfere* in the business. On the other two points I have nothing to add to the observations which your lordship has already made upon them; and we can therefore only wait with impatience for the answer to the *projet* delivered by your lordship, which will enable us to form a judgment on the intentions of the government with whom we are treating."

Here then one obstacle, at least, to the treaty, after all the previous and invidious opposition of lord Malmesbury, is effectually removed; for the third preliminary of France it seems related to the renunciation of an ideal claim which Great Britain had no intention to bring forward. But if France thought that she might be *supposed* to have contracted an obligation to England, by accepting the cession of the Netherlands with all the incumbrances, it was not officious in her, but rather a mark of good faith, to require, formally, a release from that engagement. On this point, however, it now appeared that the sentiments of both governments were precisely the same.

On the perusal of lord Grenville's letter, it is

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very apparent that the secretary had fallen into the same fatal error with the ambassador, and that neither had political penetration sufficient to perceive the extreme importance which the French attached to their preliminary demands, although they were all, in fact, points of honor infinitely more than of interest. The *first* of the three was too obviously so to require a comment. As to the *second*, the French plenipotentiaries themselves observed, "that, without a restitution of the ships, an equivalent might be found to effect the purpose desired, since *their great object* was that something should appear to prove that this just demand had not been over-looked by them, and was not left unsatisfied by us." Not a syllable had been urged by lord Malmesbury to evince the impropriety or injustice of this claim; yet lord Grenville declares, that he has nothing to add to his lordship's observations. With respect to the interest which the French government might connect with the *third* claim, as the mortgage in question extended to the revenues of all the emperor's hereditary dominions, it is evident that, admitting the responsibility of the Low Countries, the proportion which would attach to them must be extremely insignificant. These demands, which appeared to the French government so just and reasonable in themselves, and

so little injurious to England to grant, were refused in that spirit of systematic opposition, seemed to indicate, that lord Malmesbury which deemed it the first, if not the sole, duty of an ambassador, to object to every proposition that could be advanced, and to refrain from every concession that might be required. Such were the unfavorable omens under which the discussion of the English *projet* commenced. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

On the 13th of July, a conference upon this subject was held between the English ambassador and the French commissioners; when the latter stated their objections to the *second* article, importing the renewal of former treaties concluded at Nimeguen, Ryswick, Utrecht, &c. &c. as containing many particulars superfluous, irrelevant, and even discordant to the present order of things. The discussion was conducted with decorum and propriety, and it was at last agreed to enter into an attentive investigation of the several treaties specified, in order more clearly to ascertain the force of the objection. The French ministers said, "that their sincere and only desire was, that the treaty we were now entering upon might be so framed as to secure permanency, the object for which it was intended:" and lord Malmesbury rejoined, "that nothing could be so consonant to his orders, or the intentions of his royal master."

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On the 15th of July, the ambassador received a note from the French legation, which certainly appeared, upon the face of it, very extraordinary—importing that they had received fresh orders from Paris, requiring them to make the following declaration:—"There exist in the public and secret treaties by which the French republic is bound to its allies, Spain and the Batavian republic, articles by which the three powers respectively guarantie the territories possessed by each of them before the war. The French government, unable to detach itself from the engagements which it has contracted by these treaties, establishes, as an indispensable preliminary of the negotiation for the peace with England, the consent of his Britannic majesty to the restitution of all the possessions which he occupies, not only from the French republic, but, further and formally, of those of Spain and the Batavian republic. In consequence, the undersigned ministers plenipotentiary request lord Malmesbury to explain himself with regard to this restitution, and to consent to it, if he is authorized to do so; if not, and in the contrary case, to send a messenger to his court, in order to procure the necessary powers."

Unquestionably the Directory were thrown into extreme ill-humour by the obstinacy of

lord Malmesbury's opposition to the preliminary demands, and the despicable chicanery of his arguments. And, suspecting the extent of his powers, which had been in the former instance so limited, and jealous that the court of London meant, as before, merely to trifle with them—which does not appear to have been the fact, for necessity had produced sincerity, though it failed to create wisdom—they had recourse to this method of solving their doubts. Lord Malmesbury properly replied, "that he had no hesitation in declaring to them that his *instructions* did by no means authorize him to admit, as a preliminary principle, that which their declaration seemed intended to establish;"—but, previous to sending off a messenger to his court, his lordship proposed a conference for the purpose of explanation. In this conference the French commissioners were unanimously of opinion that the demand of the Directory was by no means intended to preclude discussion; on the contrary, they invited proposals from the ambassador, saying, "if they should be found such as it will be impossible for us to admit, we will, on our side, bring forward others for your court to deliberate upon."

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Notwithstanding this explanation of the commissioners, lord Grenville, in reply, (July 20) declares the claim in question to be so extrava-

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gant as to afford a strong presumption of a determination to preclude all means of accommodation, and that nothing in this case remains but to oppose with energy a system tending to perpetuate a state of war in Europe. The letter of lord Grenville, which is a very long one, discovers an extreme deficiency in diplomatic ability. If the French government in the late note meant to include the instructions as well as powers of lord Malmesbury, the negotiation must necessarily be at an end, the demand being equally absurd and insolent: if to his powers only, as the commissioners themselves understood it, the difficulty was easily and at once obviated, by vesting in him the full powers required, and leaving him to his discretion,—or, if necessary, limiting him by his instructions, in the exercise of those powers. But the letter of lord Grenville consists of a vehement declamation against a demand which, in the sense of the declaimer, was never intended to be made. Far, however, from bearing the marks of insincerity, the letter discovers great anxiety that the negotiation should proceed, even if the *projet* offered by England were wholly withdrawn, and that a disposition on the part of France appeared rather to treat upon the basis of a *contre-projet* of their own framing. And the treaty of Pilnitz having been mentioned in

the course of the late conferences, lord Malmesbury is expressly authorized to state to the French commissioners, "that if any secret treaty was, in fact, concluded at the interview at Pilnitz, between the late emperor and the king of Prussia —which (continues his lordship) is, to say the least, very doubtful in point of fact—this at least is certain, that his majesty was no party to such treaty, and not only was not then included in it, but has never since adhered to it, nor even been apprized of its contents." BOOK XXIII. 1797.

The next conference between lord Malmesbury and the French commissioners took place on the 23d of July. The French plenipotentiaries, after hearkening with great patience to the long harangue of the ambassador, founded on the letter of lord Grenville, engaged that a correct report of what he had said should be transmitted forthwith to the Directory; and they readily allowed the equity of the proposition, either to accede to the *projet* offered by him, or to bring forward one of their own. But they asserted, "that as long as they were bound by their instructions not to give way on the proposition now so decidedly rejected, it was impossible for them to move a step without new orders from the Directory." A paper was, at the request of the commissioners, put into their hands by lord Malmesbury, stating, in mild

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language, the unreasonableness of the demand made by the Directory, and the impossibility of complying with it. This was a great political error; for the commissioners had already admitted the unreasonableness of the demand, in the sense so justly offensive to the court of London; and had it been complied with in the sense of the commissioners, the obstacle which opposed itself to the farther progress of the negotiation would have been at once removed, and no possible inconvenience could have resulted from the concession.

The paper in question being transmitted by the commissioners to the Directory, with their own report of the conference, an interval of no less than fourteen days passed over in silence. At length, on the 6th of August, the commissioners informed lord Malmesbury, that they had received letters from Paris, informing them, that the Directory had taken the subject into their most serious consideration, and would acquaint them as soon as possible with the result. On lord Malmesbury's intimating how impossible it was that his Britannic majesty should not be hurt at this demur on so very simple a point, one of them said, "You ought to augur favorably from it; your note was a refusal to agree to what was stated by the Directory in their instructions to us as a *sine qua non*.—If

the Directory were determined to persist in this *sine qua non*, they would have said so at once. The time they take to deliberate, indicates, beyond a doubt, that they are looking for some temperament."

On the 12th of August, lord Malmesbury again expressed to the commissioners his chagrin, "that, day after day should pass without making a progress in the business for which they were met, and that it was material to make good the time they had lost." The commissioners, in reply, declared "that he would not think it time lost if he knew how it was applied.—We will not scruple to tell you, said one of them, though we feel we ought not yet to do it officially, that we are consulting with our allies; that we have communicated to them all that has passed here; we have stated, that, unless they mean to continue the war, they must release us from our engagements, and enable us, in a certain degree, to meet your proposals."

On the 28th of August the French plenipotentiaries informed lord Malmesbury, "that the last answer from Holland was so unsatisfactory, that the Directory had ordered it to be referred to the Dutch government for explanation, which would induce some longer delay."

On the 4th of September the important event known by the name of the Revolution of Fruc-

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tidor took place in Paris; and on the 11th of September the whole French legation was recalled, and the citizens Treilhard and Bonnier appointed in their room, who arrived on the 13th. M. le Tourneur and his colleagues made, on parting, handsome compliments to lord Malmesbury on the *loyauté et franchise* with which he had acted during the whole of the negotiation. And it must be allowed that the language used by this ambassador, both in speaking and writing, was uniformly mild and temperate; as his manners were also polite and pleasing. His general deportment was open and honorable, and no just suspicion of deceit can, on this occasion at least, attach either to his character or mission. He was deficient only in that superiority of discernment, and intellectual comprehension, which, in circumstances so new and critical, were essentially requisite to the ends of his appointment—in that consummate address which can solve or sever every difficulty, in order to attain the purpose it has in view.

In the very first conference held by lord Malmesbury with the new plenipotentiaries, September 14, it was (says his lordship) declared by them "to be a consideration of primary importance, in every negotiation, to ascertain the extent of the powers with which the negotiators are vested; that he would find theirs to be very

ample; and that, as it was necessary to the success of our discussions that mine should be *equally* so, they had it in command to present a note, the object of which was, to enquire whether I was authorized to treat on the principles of a general restitution." Lord Malmesbury expressed his surprize at the repetition of this demand, and attempted, as in the former instance, to shew the extreme unreasonableness of it, and how inevitably it must, if insisted upon, preclude all discussion or negotiation whatever. What lord Malmesbury subjoins on this head is very remarkable: "I shall not (says his lordship) attempt to follow the French minister through the very elaborate, and certainly able, speech he made in reply, with the view to convince me that the enquiry into the extent of my full powers was the strongest proof the Directory could furnish of their pacific intention, and the shortest road they could take to accomplish the desired end. It was in order to give activity to the negotiation—*activer* was his word—and to prevent its stagnating, that this demand was made so specifically; and he intimated to me that it was impossible for the Directory to proceed till a full and satisfactory answer had been given to it. *The avowal of having powers to a certain extent, he said,* DID NOT IMPLY THE NECESSITY OF EXERCISING THEM; *that it was the avowal alone*

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for which they contended, in order to determine at once the FORM *the negotiation was to take;*—that the note and the time prescribed in it were in consequence of the most positive orders from the Directory; *and that if I drew from it a conclusion different from the assurances they had made me in the name of the Directory,* I DID NOT MAKE THE TRUE INFERENCE."

It is wonderful that, after M. Treilhard had so clearly explained the nature of the demand, lord Malmesbury should still, in his reply, insist "that their question went not to the extent of his full powers, but to require of him the nature of his instructions.—The French minister (says his lordship) strove to prove to me, that the claiming a right of enquiry into the nature of the discretionary authority confided in a minister by no means implied an intention to act up to its utmost limits: and he subjoined, 'in drawing up your answer, do not forget the force of the arguments I have used, or, in your report to your court, the assurances we have given of the earnest wish of the Directory to terminate the war'." And both plenipotentiaries—perhaps concerned that, by the order of their government, they were compelled to stand upon this *étiquette*—"were most warm in their protestations that nothing could be less hostile than the spirit of their commission, and that the idea of

this negotiation breaking off was as far from their thoughts as their wishes." At length the conference broke up without any favorable impression made upon the mind of the English minister. An official note, containing the demand so obnoxious to the English court, was immediately transmitted to lord Malmesbury; to which his lordship answered, "that he neither could nor ought to treat upon any other principle than that of compensations." On the next day (September 16) another note arrived from the French commissioners, apprizing his lordship that a decree of the Directory had passed, signifying, "that in case lord Malmesbury shall declare himself not to have the necessary powers for agreeing to all the restitutions which the laws and the treaties which bind the French republic make indispensable, he shall return in four-and-twenty hours to his court, to ask for sufficient powers." To this lord Malmesbury rejoined, "that he could return no other answer to a refusal so absolute to continue the negotiation, on grounds which appeared to have been already agreed upon, than by demanding the necessary passports for himself and his suite."

Abrupt conclusion of the negotiation.

The French commissioners, in reply, say "they think it right to observe to lord Malmesbury, that he does not appear to have seized the real meaning of their note; that it by no means

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contains a refusal to continue the negotiations, but, on the contrary, the means for giving them activity, and for following them up with a success no less desirable to the two nations than it would be flattering to the ministers charged with the conduct of them. The French government is so far from entertaining the intentions which the note of lord Malmesbury appears to impute to them, that the ministers plenipotentiary of the French republic have received no order to quit Lisle after the departure of the minister plenipotentiary of his Britannic majesty."—The English ambassador, in his answer (Sept. 17) to this observation, still persists in his unfortunate error, and again repeats what had been already so often said, and as often refuted, " that the question between them, in appearance, relates solely to the limits of his full powers, which are in the most ample form; but does in fact require a declaration of the whole extent of his instructions."—This fatal mistake was the more remarkable, as M. Treilhard had taken infinite pains to demonstrate to him the difference between these two things; and had expressly declared and reiterated, that they did not mean to enquire into his instructions; and in the most intelligible manner intimated that they did not expect him to act up to the extent of his powers,

Lord Malmesbury desiring one other meeting previous to his departure, a conference for the last time took place on the 17th at noon. Nothing however passed at this conference, but a tiresome repetition of the former arguments, and renewed protestations from the French commissioners, "that the intention of the Directory was to accelerate peace, by removing every obstacle to its attainment."—From a particular expression dropped by lord Malmesbury, nevertheless, in this conference, it appears sufficiently evident that his powers were not of the full and ample nature required by the Directory: for he tells us, "that he dwelt particularly and repeatedly on his own competency to take any thing said by the French commissioners for REFERENCE." This was the very evil which the Directory meant to avoid, and which had occasioned so much delay and difficulty in the former negotiation at Paris. And one of the commissioners remarked upon it, "that the full powers which authorized a minister to *hear* proposals were widely different from those which would enable him to *accede* to them, and that it was such full powers that the Directory required him to solicit*." The ambassador, equally unable and

* Lord Bolingbroke, in a letter to the duke of Shrewsbury, May 29, 1713, says—"I observed to count Gyllenburg, that the Swedish ministers, who should be appointed to treat, should

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unwilling to give satisfaction to the French commissioners as to this demand, set off from Lisle the next morning, on his return to England.

From the pertinacious manner in which the French government persisted in this demand, it is easy to infer the extreme distrust which the Directory entertained of the ultimate purposes of England. Some sacrifices were inevitable on the part of the allies; but the reluctance of the Dutch to part with their favorite settlements of the Cape and Ceylon was extreme; and if the powers of the English ambassador were limited as to the grand article of restitution, all the address of the French negotiators to obtain more favorable conditions for Holland must have been

be furnished with ABSOLUTE POWERS. I convinced him that these would draw into no consequence which the king needed to apprehend; since, by private instructions to his ministers, he might direct them to make what use he should think fit of the authority delegated to them."

BOLINGBROKE, *Correspondence*, Vol. II.

Lord Malmesbury might, no doubt, in the present instance, have insisted that the French commissioners should be invested with absolute powers to treat on the principle of *cession*, with exactly the same reason as they required him to satisfy them respecting his absolute powers to treat on the principle of *restitution*; nor is there any ground, from the most attentive examination of the dispatches, to believe that the powers of the commissioners were limited otherwise than by their instructions.

altogether unavailing. Instructions admitted of much greater latitude, and would be much more easily varied, according to circumstances: and the Directory were unwilling to urge upon the Dutch government the necessity of concession, till they had some clear proofs of the conciliatory disposition, as well as of the sincerity, of the English court, which had so obstinately resisted the preliminary demands of France. Such at least is the most probable solution of the directorial policy, as displayed in the course of this momentous transaction. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

The conduct of lord Malmesbury was highly approved and applauded, as he had indeed a right to expect, by the court of London, from whom he received immediate orders, on his arrival in England, to pen one other dispatch to the commissioners at Lisle, conformably to the draft sent him by lord Grenville. In this letter it was again preposterously asserted, " that the demand of the Directory refers not to the full powers of the ambassador, but to the extent of his instructions;—that it is therefore only by consenting to treat upon the basis of the *projet* presented by the ambassador, or by returning a *contre projet* of a conciliatory nature, that it appears possible to continue the negotiation."—The French plenipotentiaries, after the transmission of this note to the French government,

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answer (October 1), "that when the Directory ordered its ministers to require a categorical explanation as to the powers given by the English government to its ambassador, they had no other object than to bring the negotiation to a speedy and successful issue;—that such are STILL the hopes and intentions of the Executive Directory, which enjoins the ministers plenipotentiary of the republic not to quit Lisle till the continued absence of the negotiator shall no longer leave any doubt of the intention of his Britannic majesty to break off all negotiation."

On the 5th of October this extraordinary correspondence was terminated by a note from lord Malmesbury to the French commissioners, written in terms of some asperity; and declaring "that nothing was omitted on his part to accelerate the negotiation, which has been only retarded by the delays of the Directory, and which at this moment is only suspended by its act.—With regard to the renewal of the conferences, (continues the ambassador) the undersigned can only refer to his last note, where he has explained, with frankness and precision, the only means which remain for continuing the negotiation; observing, at the same time, that the king could no longer treat in an enemy's country without being certain that the customs established amongst all civilized nations, with

regard to public ministers, and especially to those charged to negotiate for the re-establishment of peace, would be respected for the future in the person of his plenipotentiary." BOOK XXIII. 1797.

Immediately after the termination of this unfortunate negotiation, a declaration was issued by the king of England, in which his majesty was so ill advised as to assert, and such was no doubt his indignant belief, "that France had not scrupled to demand the absolute and unconditional surrender of all that the energy of his people, and the valor of his fleets and armies, have conquered during the present war: nor was even this demand brought forward as constituting the terms of peace, but as the price of negotiation, as the condition on which alone his majesty was to be allowed to learn what further unexplained demands were still reserved, and to what greater sacrifices these unprecedented concessions of honor and safety were to lead*."

* "To any other ambassador than lord Malmesbury," says the very able author of the 'QUESTION STATED' (p. 17), "the French probably would not have thought it necessary to put the question 'Whether he had, or had not, powers to treat on the principle of general restitution, &c.?' They had not forgotten, that, in his former ambassy, 'at every communication he was in want of the advice of his court.†'—Lord Malmes-

† De la Croix, December 19, 1796.

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"In speaking of the points which the plenipotentiaries of the enemy proposed for separate discussion in their first conference with the English ambassador, his majesty styles them "at once frivolous and offensive, none of them productive of any solid advantage to France; but all calculated to raise new obstacles in the way of peace." Doubtless all demands, just or unjust, made by an enemy in the course of any negotiation, may, in a general sense, be regarded as raising new obstacles in the way of peace. But how the requisition of the French republic to the king of Great Britain, to desist from the vain and foolish assumption of the title of King of France, could, in any rational sense,

bury says, 'that their question went not to the extent of his full powers, but to require of him to declare the nature of his instructions.' In the first place, he answers their question in a sense *materially* different from that which they attached to it: he then affirms, that the extent of his powers, and the nature of his instructions, are one and the same thing. But for this he assigns no reason; nor does he at all specify or intimate what the inconvenience or disadvantage would have been if he had given them a direct answer in the affirmative, which he might have done in the terms of Lord Grenville's official note of the 17th of June; viz. That his full powers included *every* case, and gave him *the most unlimited authority* to conclude any articles, treaties, &c. or, in the very terms of their own demand, understood according to the explanation with which it was accompanied.—If he had said YES, the negotiation must have proceeded, and possibly might have ended with success."

be considered as offensive, or even as frivolous, is not easy to divine; and still less how the restoration of the ships taken at Toulon, or the renunciation of a mortgage on their revenues, should not be productive of solid advantage to France.—The royal declaration concludes with the assertion, highly laudable in itself, and no less acceptable to the public, "that, though his majesty's wishes and endeavours to restore peace to his subjects had proved fruitless, his sentiments remain unaltered. He looks with anxious expectation to the moment when the government of France may shew a disposition and spirit in any way corresponding to his own."

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State of the Gallican church.

Amid the civil commotions which agitated France at this period, the fathers of the Gallican church, who had conformed to the severe injunctions of the constitution on ecclesiastical points, had ventured once more to assemble, in order to deliberate on a mode or plan of conciliation, to repair and cement such genuine parts of this sacred edifice as had been shattered by the rude and savage hand of persecuting power. The past and present state of the church was laid before this venerable body. Amongst other lamentable instances of apostacy were mentioned the marriages of twelve bishops; twelve others had abdicated their seats; eight had perished on the scaffold; one, the bishop of Dol,

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who had acted in a military capacity, had been shot as a rebel*;" and of the emigrant bishops forty had died in foreign countries. After attempting to re-organize the administration of the church, the next solicitude of these bishops was to call back their brethren who had wandered from the fold. The general answers given by the incivic clergy were comprized in a few words; such as "wolves," "forswearers," "intruders," "robbers," "heretics," "schismatics," according to the report of Grégoire, constitutional bishop of Blois, who alone, as he declares, had the patience to read over the enormous collection of three thousand pacquets laid before the synod.

The first acts of this council were, the publication of a synodical letter to the pastors and to the faithful, on the means of establishing religious peace; and another addressed to the bishops and priests resident in France, who had separated from the national communion. It was proposed that a general oblivion should cover all former dissentions, and that the acknowledged tenets of the Christian church should

* Had the bishop of Dol been reclaimed as a son of the church by the father of the faithful, his coat of mail might, agreeably to a famous historical anecdote, have been transmitted to the holy pontiff with the question subjoined, "Say whether this be thy son's coat or no?"

alone be the prescribed articles of belief, whatever might have been their opinions on the questions which had divided the church of France. Amongst these articles the council numbered the grand positions;—that the Pope is the visible head of the church on earth; that he possesses thereby the primacy of honor and jurisdiction; and that all Christians are bound implicitly to receive the dogmas promulgated by the catholic and universal church, and to condemn all the errors which it has proscribed. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

Although the French government did not, and, according to the acknowledged principles of toleration, could not, interpose to prevent the deliberations and acts of an assembly which cautiously restrained its proceedings within the limits of the law and constitution, they regarded nevertheless those proceedings with a jealous eye; and, with a view of counteracting the latent fanaticism of the vulgar religion, the Directory gave great encouragement to a new sect, recently established under the name of Theophilanthropists; one of the members of the directorial board, La Réveillière Lepaux, declaring himself openly a patron and protector of it. These religionists, rejecting all revelation, confined their worship to one Supreme Being: and, gradually increasing in number, they at length took possession, by permission of the munici- Origin of the sect of the Theophilanthropists.

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palities, of very many of the public churches—occupied, also, at other hours of the same day, by the Catholics: and the offering of the wheat ear and the *bouquet* of flowers to the divinity, as prescribed by the elegant though already superstitious ritual of the new sect, was preceded, or followed, by the mystic and sumptuous rites of the Romish church.

Treaty of Campo Formio.

From the period of the signature of the preliminaries of Leoben, general Bonaparte had been deeply engaged in regulating the interior or political concerns of Italy. Conferences had long since been opened at the village of Campo Formio, near Udina, with the plenipotentiaries of the emperor, with a view to a definitive treaty, which was at length concluded on the 17th of October, 1797. By the terms of this treaty the former preliminary articles were confirmed, but with the addition of a new one, which excited great astonishment and indignation in Europe. This was the cession, by France, to his Imperial majesty of the city of Venice, and the whole of the Venetian territory eastward of the Adige; and of a line passing through the Lago di' Garda, including that part of Istria, Dalmatia, &c. formerly belonging to the Venetian republic:—the valuable islands in the Levant, Corfu, Zante, Cephalenia, &c. being allotted, in this division of spoils, to France.

Those who were attached to the antient *régime* were exasperated at the dissolution of the regular and long-established government of Venice, and scandalized at the facility and even eagerness with which the emperor, who had entered into the war as the champion of civil and social order, and the defender of the political relations of Europe against the common destroyer, grasped at his share of the golden spoil. This was a transaction which admitted of no gloss, and exhibited itself to the perception of all mankind as an act of unprincipled and profligate rapacity*.—On the other hand, France had made voluntary and prodigal professions of protection and fraternity to all those nations which suffered under oppression, and were desirous to embrace the blessings of liberty. Instead of acting in a manner cor-

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* "The coalesced powers (says Mr. Burke) were easily taught to slide back into their old habitual school of politics, and to consider the flames that were consuming France as an happy occasion for pillaging the goods, and carrying off the materials, of their neighbour's house." 'REGICIDE PEACE.' To accuse the coalesced powers of *sliding back* into their old habits seems unjust—it does not appear that they ever relinquished them.

It may transiently be noticed that in the month of September, in the present year, M. de La Fayette, La Tour Maubourg, and Bureau de Pusy, were, through the intercession of General Bonaparte with the emperor, at length, liberated from the gloomy dungeons in which they had been so long incarcerated.

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respondent to her professions, and re-constructing the fallen government of the Venetians on principles of justice and equity, she now treacherously transferred to the Austrian despotism a people over whom she possessed no other right or power excepting that which always appertains to the strongest. The Venetians themselves were struck with consternation at this unlooked-for proceeding. Not only had the inhabitants of the Venetian states indulged the idea of exchanging their oligarchical regimen for the blessings of a free government, but they had actually named, under the sanction of the French general, in almost every commune, provisionary authorities, and taken every step for the formation of a republic founded on equal rights. It was therefore with bursts of indignation and despair that they heard of that article of the definitive treaty which consigned them to Austria; and it was said that general Bonaparte himself yielded with great reluctance to the sacrifice, and only in obedience to the positive orders of the Directory, who could not be supposed regardful of those sacred rights in other communities which they had with unhallowed and parricidal hands well nigh extinguished in their own.

By a secret but important article of the treaty of Campo Formio, the archbishopric of Saltz-

burg, with some adjoining districts of Bavaria, making the river Inn the boundary on that side of the Austrian territory, was also allotted to the emperor;—all which tract of country, as well as his Venetian acquisitions, were so conveniently situated, and coalesced so well with the general mass of the Imperial dominions, as to form much more than a compensation for the remote and insulated provinces which he had lost. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

The treaty of Campo Formio being concluded with the emperor only, as king of Hungary and Bohemia, the pacification of the empire with the French republic was referred to a congress to be held at Rastadt. The organization of the new Cisalpine republic, agreeably to the model of France, was by this time completed, and all places of trust and dignity filled according to the *recommendation* of general Bonaparte, who made, at the instalment of the executive government, an able and eloquent speech, exhorting them, "now they had attained to liberty, to conduct themselves in such a manner as to become worthy of their high destiny, in making only wise and moderate laws, and executing them with force and energy, by favoring the diffusion of knowledge, and respecting the rights of conscience." The new and friendless monarch of Sardinia was still left in nominal pos- Congress at Rastadt.

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session of Piedmont, at the price of entering into a strict alliance, offensive and defensive, with France.—At the latter end of November, general Bonaparte left Italy; and, taking his journey through Berne and Rastadt, receiving every-where the highest honors, this extraordinary personage arrived at Paris near the end of the year, leaving the commissioners, Treilhard and Bonnier, to represent the republic in the congress, which was to open on the 1st of January ensuing (A.D. 1798).

The ratification by the Directory of the treaty of Udina, or Campo Formio, as it was more usually styled, was followed by a proclamation, addressed to the armies, in which it was observed, "that although so much had been done, so many kings conquered, so many people set free, and the republic itself established by the valor of its arms, yet the country expected one more sacrifice; since the enemy, who had been the original cause of all the horrors and miseries which they had suffered, both from foreign and civil war, remained yet to be crushed; and that the safety of the republic was endangered whilst the ENGLISH GOVERNMENT existed." This declaration was followed by two resolutions: 1st, That an army should be immediately assembled on the coasts of the Channel, under the name of the Army of England; and, 2dly, That general Bo-

naparte should be appointed the commander-in-chief. BOOK XXIII.

On the injudicious recal of Mr. Monroe, the American ambassador, from France, the Directory refused to receive the credentials of Mr. Pinckney, his successor, until their grievances were redressed; and in the month of January, 1797, that minister received formal notice to quit the territory of the republic; in consequence of which order he accordingly retired to Amsterdam. At the opening of the ensuing session of the congress at Philadelphia, in the spring of 1797, the new president, Mr. Adams, declared it "to be his sincere desire to preserve peace and friendship with all nations; and that, believing neither the honor nor the interest of the United States absolutely to forbid the repetition of advances for securing these desirable objects with France, he should institute a fresh attempt at negotiation." Three commissioners were named for the purpose—Mr. Marshall and Mr. Gerry being joined with general Pinckney. These gentlemen were allowed to remain quietly at Paris, but could make little or no progress towards an accommodation of differences. The spirit of intrigue, extravagance, and corruption, at this period, pervaded every branch of the directorial government, which was distinguished only by its tyranny, its imbecility, and rapa-

1797. Extraordinary reception of the American commissioners at Paris.

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city. After the revolution of the 18th Fructidor, scarcely did this government deign to attempt the concealment of its vices. At a conference, held by the commissioners in the month of October (1797) with a confidential friend and agent of the minister of foreign relations, Talleyrand, that person expatiated largely on the animosity discovered by the American president, in his speech to the congress, against the French republic—and on the keen resentment which it had excited in France; saying, that satisfaction was indispensably necessary previous to negotiation: "But (said he), gentlemen, I will not disguise from you, that, this satisfaction being made, the essential part of the treaty remains to be adjusted—*Il faut de l'argent: il faut beaucoup de l'argent.*"—He affirmed, "that the Directory were jealous of their *own* honor; jealous of the honor of the NATION; and this honor must be maintained, unless we substituted, in place of the reparations demanded, something perhaps more valuable—*that was* MONEY! There were to the amount of 32 millions of florins of Dutch rescriptions, which, if the commissioners would engage to take as a security for a loan to the same amount, it would be a great accommodation. There shall (said he) be first taken from the loan certain sums for the purpose of making the customary distributions in diplo-

matic affairs. This sum, according to diplomatic usage, he estimated at about 1,200,000 livres." The commissioners replied, "that the American government would have supposed such a proposition, if made by them, would have given mortal offence." He asked (say the commissioners in their official account of this conference) "if our government did not know that nothing was to be obtained here without money?" The commissioners answered, "that such a state of things was not even suspected." He appeared surprized at it, and said, "there was not an American in Paris who could not have given that information*." The commissioners refusing with disdain these ignominious conditions of peace, the negotiation remained entirely suspended: and the president, Mr. Adams, in a message to the congress (March 1798), with good reason declared, "that he perceived no ground of expectation that the objects of their mission could be accomplished on terms compatible with the safety, honor, or the essential interests of the nation."

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Arrest of the Portuguese ambassador.

M. d'Aranjo, ambassador from Portugal, at Paris, had been this summer employed in negotiating a separate peace, and had actually concluded a treaty on the 10th of August,

* Vide "Official Narrative of the Commissioners."

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which was to be ratified in two months;—a period which was, no doubt, by the court of Lisbon, deemed sufficient to determine the issue of the negotiation depending between France and England. The negotiation breaking off, and the treaty consequently not being ratified, it was declared by the Directory null and void, and M. d'Aranjo ordered to quit the territories of the republic. But lingering, probably for some purpose of political intrigue, beyond the time specified in the order, he was, by an extraordinary stretch of power, committed prisoner to the Temple; whence, however, he was released, after no long interval of confinement or sufferance.

Death of Count Bernstorf.

In the course of the present year died the celebrated Danish minister, count Bernstorf, deeply lamented not merely by his countrymen, but by all the friends of peace and humanity throughout Europe. Diligent and indefatigable in business, he had a ready conception, and a happy manner of expressing his ideas. An enemy to flattery, indifferent to pleasure, firm, sagacious, beneficent—never was any statesman more universally admired and revered. Easy of access, simple in his manners, with a temper always equal, communicative, and affable—never was any man in his individual capacity more esteemed and beloved. The affranchisement of

the Danish peasants, the abolition of the negro trade, the acquisition of Holstein, and the calm wisdom with which he steered the vessel of the state amid the storms and tempests which agitated Europe for the last seven eventful years of revolution and war, will render his administration for ever memorable in Denmark.

Death of the king of Prussia.

In the month of November this year, a personage of a very different description, Frederic-William II. king of Prussia, departed this life. During his reign, which lasted eleven years, Prussia maintained her full influence as a political power in Europe; though his ability for government did not rise above the royal accomplishment of KING-CRAFT, or what is in other men styled *cunning*. The fabric of Prussian greatness had indeed been constructed with a master-hand; nor were the same talents requisite for maintaining as for erecting the edifice. His general conduct participated more of the rapacity of a robber than the ardor of a hero—all was mean, selfish, and contracted; nor can the nearest view detect one virtue to mitigate the horror with which every honest man must contemplate the conspirator of Pilnitz and the plunderer of Poland.

This monarch was succeeded by his son, Frederick-William III. who on his accession adopted such measures of justice and prudence as in-

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spired an entire confidence in his subjects, and augured a better and happier reign than that of his father.

Since the commencement of the present war, a proclamation had issued every year for the observance of a FAST; and a service composed for the occasion by the bishops was ordered to be read in the churches—many of the offices contained in which were by some, thought rather calculated to inflame the minds of the ignorant multitude against the enemy, than to impress upon them sentiments of penitence, devotion, or humanity; and the general strain of them better adapted to the character of priests of MOLOCH than of CHRIST.—"We prostrate ourselves before thee"—such is the language of the first morning collect of this pious ritual—"in earnest prayer and supplication, in behalf of ourselves and other Christian nations, exposed at this time to the cruelty or groaning under the oppression of apostates from thy truth, and despisers of thy holy name, who have spread desolation wherever they have erected their standard." And in a certain form of words, called A PRAYER for our ENEMIES, we find the following *meek* and *benevolent* expressions:—"Suffer us, we beseech thee, in the spirit of Christian charity, to offer our humble intercessions for the repentance and conversion of men who have cast off

their faith in thee the living GOD, and, following the vain imaginations of reprobate minds, have plunged themselves into crimes and impieties which astonish the Christian world.—Open their eyes, O LORD!—Strike them, in thy mercy, with remorse and compunction," &c. &c. BOOK XXIII. 1797.

National thanksgiving.

At the end of the present year, Providence having declared so openly and decidedly in our favor by the late naval victories, it was determined by his majesty to go, attended by the two houses of parliament, and the great officers of state, (December 19) in religious and triumphal procession, to the cathedral of St. Paul, in order to offer up a public and national thanksgiving for the same. The flags and colours taken from the French, Spaniards, and Dutch, accompanied with bands of music, &c. were borne in solemn pomp to the cathedral, and deposited with holy exultation upon the altar. After which a sermon was preached by the lord bishop of Lincoln, fraught with such sentiments of *self-abasement, contrition,* and *humility,* as the following: —"Where will be found such strict adherence to public faith, such impartial administration of justice, such fidelity in the concerns of private life, such liberal attention to the poor, such kindness to the stranger, such generosity to the prisoner, as in this country? While our enemies have insulted the MAJESTY of HEAVEN, WE have

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HUMBLED ourselves before GOD, and ACKNOWLEDGED our TRANSGRESSIONS.—While THEY have impiously denied his all-controling power, WE have prayed unto the Lord to give wisdom to our councils, success to our arms, and steadiness to our people, and he has heard us!—The banners which you have this day seen presented at the altar of this cathedral-church of the metropolis, as the most public testimony of DEVOUT and HUMBLE gratitude to the Supreme Disposer of Events, are not the trophies of a single victory over one enemy, but of a series of victories equally brilliant and important over the three nations of Europe most distinguished for their maritime power.—Our naval strength, raised to a height unknown at any former period, not only exceeds that of every rival neighbour, but has compelled each, in his turn, to submit to our superiority*."

* The passionate desire of the court, and of the clergy connected with the court, to represent the war as a war of religion, is very remarkable. The cause of religion, it has been well observed, is a modern motive to war, invented by the Christian priesthood refining upon the Heathen. The extreme callousness of the higher orders of the clergy, in general, to the miseries of mankind, is indeed a striking feature of the profession. Wholly absorbed in the exalted feelings of devotion, they rise far superior to those of humanity. Who can forget that, to the very latest period of the American contest, the venerable Shipley, only, of the twenty-six English bishops, gave his vote

Bowing with reverential awe to the grand religious and philosophical conclusion, that an invisible and incomprehensible Power, the first and sole cause of all things, existing from eternity, filling immensity, and infinite in all perfections, does not disdain, from the sublime elevation of his heavenly throne, to cast his view upon this lower world, and to account it no derogation from his ineffable dignity to contemplate the miserable contentions of the frail and erring race of man,—surely so transcendently excellent a Being, must regard with displeasure whatever has a tendency to disturb the moral order, happiness, and harmony, of his creation; and wars of pride, ambition, and revenge, whether successful or unsuccessful, must equally excite the divine anger and indignation,—more especially when with profane effrontery they assume the appellation of Wars of justice, necessity, and religion—with vain and gaudy pageantry invoking his Almighty name, and boasting the sanction of his sacred and supreme authority. To such devotion and such prayers the answer is already known— 1797.

against the court: and that the liberal and enlightened Watson alone in the present times, half fearful and half ashamed, ventured an opinion against the French crusade?

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" Can I be flatter'd with thy cringing bows,
Thy solemn chatterings, and fantastic vows?
Are my eyes charm'd thy vestments to behold,
Glaring in gems, and gay in woven gold?
Unthinking wretch! how could'st thou hope to please
A GOD, a SPIRIT, with such toys as these!"

BOOK XXIV.

Session of Parliament 1797-8. *Secession of the Majority of the Members in Opposition. Debates on the Address. Papers relative to the Negotiation at Lisle laid before Parliament. Conduct of Ministers approved. Warlike Ardor of the Nation revives. Restrictions upon the Bank continued. Annual Statement of Finance. Triple Assessment imposed. Defective Plan for the Redemption of the Land-Tax. Voluntary Contributions to the War. Invasion threatened by France. Vigorous Preparations for the National Defence. Duel between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Tierney. Motion of Mr. Wilberforce for the Abolition of the Slave-Trade. Address to the Throne moved by the Duke of Bedford. Debates on the State of Ireland. Twelve Regiments of English Militia sent to Ireland. Patriotic Spirit displayed by the British Nation. Termination of the Session. Affairs of Ireland investigated. Irish Catholics engage in a criminal Intercourse with France. Dreadful Situation of the Kingdom. Conciliatory Proposition of the Earl of Moira. Progress of the Irish Conspiracy. Trial of Arthur O'Connor. Arrest of the Irish Directory. Rebellion in Ireland. Rebels defeated at New Ross—And at Enniscorthy. Earl Cornwallis appointed Chief Governor. Rebellion suppressed in the South. Extreme Bigotry of the Irish Catholics. Rebellion suppressed in the North. Civil and Judicial Proceedings. French Force lands in the Bay of*

Killala. Rebellion in the West—Suppressed by Lord Cornwallis. Surrender of the French. Naval Victory gained by Sir J. B. Warren on the Coast of Ulster. Miscellaneous Transactions on the Continent. Insurrection at Rome. Death of General Duphot. Subversion of the Papal Government. Re-establishment of the Roman Republic. Affairs of Switzerland—Hostile Demands of the French Directory—Invasion of the French under General Brune—Patriotic Resistance of the Democratic Cantons—Reduction of Switzerland by the French. State of Affairs in France. Election of Treilhard as a Member of the Directory. Incapacity and Oppression of the Directorial Government. Affairs of Holland—Partial Change in the Government. Disastrous Expedition of the English, under General Coote, to Ostend. Island of Minorca captured. Port-au-Prince, in St. Domingo, evacuated by the English. Domestic Occurrences. Mr. Fox struck out of the List of Privy Counsellors. Prosecution of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield. Invasion of Egypt under General Bonaparte. Victory of the Pyramids. Capture of Grand Cairo. Total Defeat of the French Fleet by Admiral Nelson at Aboukir—Extraordinary Effects resulting from that Event. Proceedings of the Congress at Rastadt. Revival of the War in Germany and in Italy. Neapolitan Army enters Rome. Defeat of the Neapolitans. Capua surrenders to the French. Naples taken by Storm. Subversion of the Regal Government. Treaty between Great Britain and Russia. Wise Conduct of the King of Prussia.

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Session of parliament 1797-98.

THE parliament met on the 2d of November, 1797. His majesty expressed his confidence, "that the papers laid before the two houses would prove, to them and to the world, that every step had been taken on his part which

could tend to accelerate the conclusion of peace: and that the long delay and final rupture of the negotiation are solely to be ascribed to the evasive conduct, the unwarrantable pretensions, and the inordinate ambition of those with whom we have to contend; and, above all, to their inveterate animosity against these kingdoms." At the conclusion of the speech, however, his majesty, after exhorting the two houses to the most animated exertions, declared "that he retained an ardent desire for the conclusion of peace, on safe and honorable terms."

Secession of the majority of the members in opposition.

When the king's speech came to be taken into consideration by the commons, the house presented a singular and melancholy appearance—the benches of opposition being in a manner deserted. Wearied and disgusted with attending, year after year, merely to be out-voted in the house, and reviled with every expression of contumely and reproach by the ministerial hirelings out of the house, as the secret enemies of their country, who, from the most culpable motives, were employed in counteracting the efforts of a wise and beneficent government in a crisis of public danger,—seeing no prospect of awakening the nation to that deep and just sense of their condition which was necessary in order to render them lasting and essential service,—they determined, with few exceptions, to withdraw

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from the contest, and, since their counsel was rejected, not to persist in a fatiguing, incessant, and fruitless opposition. Upon these grounds was the nation deprived of the benefit derivable from the clear understanding and accurate judgment of a GREY, of the impressive and animated effusions of a WHITBREAD, of the keen penetration and brilliant eloquence of a SHERIDAN, and, above all, from the majestic and commanding genius of a FOX.

Debates on the address.

The address moved by Mr. Wilbraham Bootle did not, however, pass altogether unnoticed. Mr. Bryan Edwards, a name well known, and highly respected in the political and literary world, observed, "that the present war had been attended with a waste of wealth and prodigality of blood not to be paralleled in the history of human depravity. Two hundred millions of money had been the expenditure of four years, and not less than two hundred thousand the lives that have been lost. And what prospect did the king's speech hold out to us? Was it indemnity for the past, and security for the future? No; it menaced us with more carnage, more tears, more sighs, and perhaps deeper, of mothers, widows, and children. But had no efforts, it might be asked, been made to obtain peace? No; none suitable to the occasion; none founded on sincerity, and breathing the ge-

mine spirit of concord. The terms (he said) which the French would have granted at the first mission of lord Malmesbury were such as the minister would now gladly accept. He would not then be satisfied without the restitution of Belgium; and the safety of England was sacrificed to the interest of the emperor. As to the second mission, it would have been, in his opinion, a happy circumstance, if that noble lord had been empowered at the outset to make the offer of restitution demanded by France. He conceived that the foreign territories possessed by Great Britain, previous to the war, fully sufficed for every purpose both of commerce and security. At all events they were not of that value which would justify the hazard and loss which we must sustain by a farther prosecution of the war." Mr. Edwards concluded his speech with lamenting the absence of Mr. Fox, and expressing his fears lest this distinguished patriot had retired, oppressed with prophetic anguish, and despairing, under the present system, of the salvation of the country. 1797.

Mr. Wilberforce acknowledged himself "far from participating in the poignant grief expressed for the absence of Mr. Fox, except indeed it could be proved that his presence could extricate the country from the difficulties in which it

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was involved. Every body knew that the nation was in a critical situation; and he should therefore, for himself, pursue a line of conduct the reverse of that adopted by Mr. Fox and his friends. He would punctually attend to the discharge of his duty, and, however discouraging the prospect, would exert his best abilities to perform it from an inward sense of right, not biassed by motives of *personal ambition*." Passing from this most unwarrantable insinuation to the motion before the house, he declared "the address to be such as all descriptions of gentlemen might consent to, who were sensible of the blessings of our constitution. Ministers were sincerely solicitous for the restoration of peace, but were equally ready vigorously to prosecute the war, if the ambition and obstinacy of the enemy reduced us to it. As Englishmen, we should feel it our duty to stand at our post to the last, nor imitate the example of those, who, under circumstances of difficulty and danger, would pusillanimously desert it."

Mr. Nichols asked "how long the calamities of war were to be endured by the people of Great Britain, for the sake of securing the Cape and Ceylon to the East-India Company. Whilst our ears were stunned with public rejoicings for victories which availed little, our finances required the most serious attention. From July

1796, to July 1797, an addition of 2,600,000*l.* appeared in the dividends of the three-per-cents. which was equal to an addition of eighty-seven millions and a half of capital. Ministers had long been tried, and tried to no purpose; and we owed it as a duty to his majesty, to recommend to him a change of them." The address, after various other speeches, was carried without a division.

In the house of lords, the marquis of Lansdown distinguished himself by an able and animated speech, in which he entreated their lordships "to surrender up their prejudices, and consider the danger of their situation. The restoration of peace was absolutely necessary to the salvation of the country; and, if his majesty would deign to enquire into the most likely method of obtaining it, every honest man would tell him it was by a change of ministers. May we not with reason," argued his lordship, "suppose the Directory to say, 'We have convinced the powers on the continent of Europe of the folly of the crusade they undertook against us. We have sent armies into the field, whose victories have surpassed those of antient Rome. We are secure in the enjoyment of our liberties, and have enlarged the limits of our territory. One obstinate nation only, under hot-headed councils, persists in its attack upon us, charg-

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ing us with every species of atrocity, and denouncing us to the world as the authors of a war which has deluged Europe in blood. This power is at length brought to embarrassments which it can neither palliate nor conceal. It stands on a tottering base, and is ready to sink under the violence of its own efforts. Shall we yield to this insulated foe, who, even in asking peace, means hostility?' Such, while the present ministers guide the councils of the country (said his lordship) must be the feelings, and such the language, of the French government. When lord Malmesbury was first sent to Paris, a hostile treaty was negotiating with Russia. The second negotiation at Lisle was accompanied by that counter-revolutionary insurrection in the interior of France which produced the convulsion of the 4th of September, and in which they said they discovered the hand of the English minister. The French government had openly asserted the fact: Did his majesty's late declaration disprove the charge? As to the terms of peace, his lordship said that the Cape was an useless acquisition, and Trincomale not worth retaining at the price of farther slaughter. We had gained the East without it; and to continue the war another campaign for the sake of it would be to estimate its value at thirty millions. Let us (concluded his lordship) endeavour to regain the

good opinion of Europe, which we have lost by our pride and rapacity; let us proclaim freedom to neutral nations; and, by thus recognizing the commercial liberty of the world, we should be the first to profit by it."

His lordship was supported by the duke of Norfolk, who declared his great dissatisfaction with the terms of the address, as he was far from being convinced "that every step had been taken on his majesty's part to accelerate peace;" and no papers had been laid before them to justify such an assertion. His grace therefore moved an amendment, which was over-ruled, and the address, as originally moved by the earl of Glasgow, passed without a division.

Papers relative to the negotiation at Lisle laid before parliament.

On the 10th of November, the papers relative to the late negotiation being taken into consideration by the commons, and an address of thanks and approbation moved, sir John Sinclair observed, "that the charges brought against the government of France in the present address, and in the late royal declaration, were not justified by the papers laid before the house. It was affirmed in the declaration, that the preliminary demands of France were frivolous and offensive; but to this, on referring to the demands themselves, he could not accede. It was farther stated, that it was not the wish of

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the French government to make peace; whereas the French plenipotentiaries had expressed the wishes of the Directory in the strongest terms, and, as lord Malmesbury acknowledged, had exerted themselves ably to prove that the proposition which had given so much offence was by no means inconsistent with their professions. France (he said) was inveterate against us, because we shewed ourselves inveterate against her; and the Directory might possibly entertain a design to overturn our government, because we had endeavoured to overturn theirs. To prevent the perpetuation of these sentiments, he moved an amendment, expressing the resolution of that house to support his majesty in the war, expunging the words 'inveterate animosity,' and declaring that, whenever France was disposed to treat on reasonable terms, we would not refuse to negotiate."

The chancellor of the Exchequer expressed his concern and disappointment that the opinion of the house should not, on this occasion, be unanimous, and pretended much surprize at the proposed amendment of the honorable baronet. "The continuance of the war (he said) was to be solely ascribed to the implacable animosity, to the insatiable ambition, to the unwarrantable pretensions, of the present frantic government of France. To them, not to us,

were the guilt and the responsibility of future extremities to be imputed. Ministers had exerted every effort to procure peace; and, from the commencement of the negotiation to its final rupture, the whole of the intermediate delay was owing to the evasive conduct of France. The sincerity of ministers (Mr. Pitt said) was fully proved by the concessions which they had declared themselves willing to make, and the sacrifices which they offered. For what were these sacrifices made? For peace. To whom were these sacrifices offered? To an enemy whose forces had never separately met the military strength of this country without adding to our national glory and renown—an enemy, whose commerce was extinguished, whose navy was annihilated, whose financial distress, however palliated by their *partisans* here, was loudly proved in the groans, in the contentions of the councils, in the acts of directorial violence. On reviewing the state of the two countries, let the world judge the value of the concessions on one part, and the force of the claim upon the other. Compare the mutual means of offence and resistance,—the power of the French to take from us, and the ability of this country to retain,—and, upon that comparison, decide whether the *projet* of his majesty did not manifest proofs of sincerity and moderation. But to this display

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of sincerity and moderation the arrogance and duplicity of the French afforded a complete contrast. Endless delays ensued; and they required that we, whom they had summoned to treat for a definitive treaty, should stop and discuss preliminary points; insisting that his majesty should resign the title of King of France, a *harmless feather*, at least, which his ancestors had for centuries worn in their crowns*. They demanded restitution of the ships taken at Toulon, or a compensation; and a renunciation of any mortgage which this country might possess for the loan to the emperor. The French plenipotentiaries were immediately informed, that this country preferred no such claim, and that the concession was needless.

"We next were called upon to subscribe, as a preliminary, that we were prepared to give up every thing we had acquired during the war. Such a preliminary could not be admitted by any man who was not disposod to adore the idol of the French power in prostrate baseness. His

* But, amidst the assemblage of diamonds, pearls, and rubies, which composed his majesty's crown, why should he be solicitous to retain a trumpery *feather*,—a feather, too, which, however worthless, did not rightfully appertain to him; and which, as a cause of irritation, and a mark of insult, was by no means, what Mr. Pitt styled it, "a harmless feather."

majesty did not hesitate in refusing to comply with such insolent demands. BOOK XXIV. 1797.

"The Directory, however, did not then adhere to the extravagance of them: a long delay, to amuse their people, took place. They pleaded it as a proof of the sincerity of their pacific intentions, and pretended that they were under the necessity of sending to their allies an account of what passed; that they were endeavouring to prevail upon them to put an end to the calamities of a war into which they had brought those allies, and who have ever since been in a state of abject subjection to them, whatever importance they affected to give them in this negotiation. They then directed their plenipotentiaries to inform lord Malmesbury, that they had obtained an answer, but it was not satisfactory, and that they were obliged to send another messenger.

"It was thus they concealed their insincerity till the dreadful catastrophe of the 4th of September: and even some days after that violence broke out in Paris they promised to produce their *projet*—still pacific in their professions, and inimical in their designs. The step which they took after this last assurance was to renew, in a more offensive form, the demand which had been rejected by lord Malmesbury two months before, in which rejection they had acquiesced, and we,

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in the interval, had been waiting for the proposals which were to come from them. He would leave others to imagine what was likely to have been the end of a negotiation in which it was a preliminary to resign every thing *.

"But it is essential (said Mr. Pitt) that we should know the real aim of the enemy. It is not our commerce, it is not our wealth, it is not our colonies in the West, or our territories in the East; nor is it our maritime greatness, or the extent of our empire—No; the object is our LIBERTY!—the basis of our independence, the

* Upon this extraordinary statement of the English minister it is sufficient to remark, that the Directory never receded, or, in all probability, meant to recede, from their demand that lord Malmesbury should satisfy them with regard to the full extent of his powers. When that point was ascertained, and not till then, the plenipotentiaries of France were ready to engage in the discussion of the *projet* of England; and if that plan was not accepted by the Directory, the French commissioners pledged themselves to bring forward a *contre-projet* of their own. Than this mode of procedure, nothing certainly could be fairer. But, if lord Malmesbury's powers were limited, as they strongly suspected, (and it should prove that he could treat only upon the basis of the *projet* he had offered) it was in vain for the French government to propose any other plan of pacification. And the demand by lord Malmesbury of a *contre-projet*, in which the interest of their allies, Holland and Spain, *must* have been in some degree sacrificed, was, on that supposition, wholly nugatory, to say the least,—probably artful and insidious.

citadel of our happiness, our CONSTITUTION! They themselves have declared it, openly avowed that our government and theirs cannot subsist together, and their endeavour is to destroy it. Should they come amongst us, they would bring with their invading army the great pestilence to man, the genius of French liberty, which contains in it every curse to society—in the place of our glorious principles and equal laws will be a hideous monster, whom nothing can content but the annihilation of the British empire. And are we under such circumstances to be afraid or ashamed to declare, in a firm and manly tone, that we will defend ourselves? Are we to shun the truth, and forget the energy which belongs to Englishmen? If, therefore, we value property, liberty, law, if we value national power or domestic happiness, we shall resist these demands with indignation. There was not a man, let his enjoyments be ever so considerable, who ought not to sacrifice whatever portion of them might be requisite to oppose the violence of the enemy: nor one whose stock was so small, that he should not be ready to sacrifice his life in the same cause. We owed it in gratitude to Providence, whose goodness had placed us so high in the scale of nations, and caused us to be the admiration of Europe, with most of the governments of which ours was a happy contrast.

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The means of our safety were still in our hands, our blessings were many, and the preservation of them was our highest duty. He trusted that we never should abandon it, to whatever extremity we might be driven, but cheerfully enter into a pledge for the sincere performance of it, declaring our determination to stand or fall by the laws, liberties, and religion, of our country."

Conduct of ministers approved.

Such was the fascinating influence of this speech, the whole force of which depended on the false and absurd assumption "that the French insisted on the entire restitution of all the acquisitions made by England in the course of the war, as a preliminary to negotiation," that it seemed to satisfy all doubts, and to silence all opposition.

Mr. Pollen complimented the minister on his eloquent harangue, and professed his belief in the sincerity of the ministry, imputing the failure of the negotiation solely to the French government. Of many of the past measures of the administration, (Mr. Pollen said) he had disapproved; but he now felt the necessity of throwing a veil over the past, and the address had his most cordial support.

Mr. Martin applauded the speech, which he thought very convincing, and the amendment altogether unnecessary. Seeing the French de-

termined to dictate unreasonable conditions, he allowed we ought not to permit ourselves to be trampled upon, but to evince the spirit which became a great nation. BOOK XXIV. 1797.

Lord Temple and Dr. Lawrence blamed the minister for having offered so much to the French as the price of peace, and were for pursuing the war with spirit and resolution till the enemy were completely vanquished.

Mr. Wilberforce hoped that, in this crisis, Englishmen would feel the necessity of coming forward, joining hand and heart, and proclaiming to the world that, however divided before, they would unite for general safety. Of this universal harmony of sentiment he thought the unanimity of that night a happy omen, and he hoped the honorable baronet would withdraw his amendment, in order to give this first expression of it the fullest force.

Sir John Sinclair then said, "that he sincerely wished for unanimity, and *candidly* confessed he was not insensible to the weight of the arguments he had just heard, and therefore cheerfully consented to withdraw his motion." Thus the minister came off triumphantly victorious, and the house broke up completely duped, and completely satisfied.

Warlike ardor of the nation revives.

The nation at large, also imbibing the same general idea, not merely that the concessions

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offered by England were very great, which was certainly true, but that the claims of France were highly unreasonable and unjust, which was as certainly false, evinced an extraordinary and sudden renewal of ardor in the prosecution of the war. Animated, at the same time, by the great and recent victory of lord Duncan, and not perfectly well pleased with the secession of the members in opposition, they seemed inclined again to entrust that confidence to Mr. Pitt he so little merited, and which had appeared of late visibly weakened and impaired.

In the house of lords, an address, similar to that of the commons, was moved by lord Grenville, who supported it in a long and elaborate speech and by a great variety of arguments and assertions equally novel and curious. His lordship declared, "that the French plenipotentiaries had demanded of us, as a preliminary, to renounce all that we had to ask, and to declare all that we would concede. It would (his lordship affirmed) have been not folly merely, but TREASON, in any minister to have complied with a demand so derogatory to the honor, and so fatal to the interests, of his country.—He was at a loss to conceive what palliations could possibly be offered for the conduct of the enemy; though," in his usual style of insinuation, his lordship added, that "he well knew and

lamented that every measure of the French government, in relation to this country, found more able and ingenious apologists here than in France;" thus attempting to throw odious imputations upon those who, by detecting and exposing his manifold errors in the face of day, had so clearly manifested his political incapacity. The principal lords in opposition having seceded, as well as the commons, the address passed without any debate or division.

Restrictions upon the bank continued.

In a very early period of the session, a bill was introduced into the lower house to continue the restrictions upon the Bank, which passed with trifling opposition, or, indeed, observation.

Annual statement of finance.

On the 22d of November, Mr. Pitt brought forward his annual statement of accounts. The whole expence of the year appeared to amount, by this statement, to 25 millions and a half. In order to furnish a supply equal to this enormous demand, he declared it to be his intention to have recourse to a perfectly new and SOLID SYSTEM of FINANCE. Of this sum, six millions and a half would arise from the unappropriated produce of the sinking fund, Exchequer bills, and unmortgaged taxes. Nineteen millions were then to be provided for. Seven of these he proposed to raise *within the year* by a new impost, which should be regulated by the existing assess-

Triple assessment imposed.

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ed taxes in a triplicate proportion to their actual amount—limited, however, to the tenth of each person's income. Of the remaining twelve millions, four might be borrowed without creating any additional debt; the produce of the sinking fund, old and new, appropriated to the purpose of liquidating the national debt, being equal to that amount. For the other eight millions, he proposed that the triple assessment be continued till the principal and interest be completely discharged; so that, after seven millions should be raised for the service of the year, the same taxes, in little more than another year, would pay off the eight millions thus borrowed, with the intermediate interest. This plan (he said) would extremely damp the hopes of the enemy. He acquiesced in what had been so often said, that it would have been fortunate if the practice of funding had never been introduced; and he affirmed, that it was much to be lamented it had not been sooner terminated: but the period was now arrived, when an absolute necessity existed for a radical change of system.

Mr. Tierney, recently elected member for Southwark, a man of great parliamentary information and industry, and who had declined joining in the secession from parliament, wished to be satisfied upon what grounds the Bank refused

its creditors payment in specie, whilst at the same time it increased its advances to government?—How a system of raising supplies which shewed that we had arrived at the end of all regular means of supply could damp the hopes of the enemy he could not conjecture; and he asked upon what new funds the necessary loans were to be raised the ensuing years of the war? for, with the present administration, he held it impossible the country could have peace. The right honorable gentleman wanted the requisites to bring about a peace. He wanted the respect and confidence not only of France but of Europe.

Mr. Curwen reminded the house "that peace without indemnity might at least have been procured; and it became gentlemen to consider whether the war was worth carrying on for the sake of indemnity. It was not for any injury done to us, but to our allies, the Dutch, that we entered into the war; and we were now for indemnifying ourselves at their expence."

The bill brought into the house in consequence of the resolutions now passed was opposed with mush vivacity in every stage; and on the second reading Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan made again their appearance in the house. Mr. Sheridan affirmed, that it would be impossible for a very numerous class of housekeepers ever to pay this

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dreadful tax, and that, if the new system was enforced, it would go near to erect a fiscal inquisition in every house.

Mr. Fox declared, that he attended that night in conformity to the earnest request of his constituents.—He stigmatized the whole measure as bearing the stamp of despotism; and particularly reprobated that part of the bill, as manifestly unjust, which put it out of the power of persons to lessen their taxes by retrenching their expences. This clause (he said) reminded him of the illustration which Sterne gives us of the violent extortion of the ancient government of France. "When at Lyons, Yorick resolved to change his mode of travelling, and sail down the Rhône instead of going post. The post-master, however, applied to him for six livres six sous, as the price of the next post. 'But I do not intend to travel post (said Yorick), I mean to go by water.' 'That's no matter (said the post-master), you must pay for the next post whether you have changed your mind or not.'" He remarked also, that to rouze the energy of the people it was necessary to hear of the sacrifices of the crown. It was from the highest place that the example ought to be given. It would animate and cheer the hearts of all his majesty's faithful subjects.

"Solamen miseris socios habuisse laborum."

Mr. Fox concluded a speech fraught with excellence by protesting that he never would accept a seat high or low in any administration until public opinion shall have decided for a thorough and perfect reform of all abuses, and for a direct return to the genuine but violated principles of the British constitution. BOOK XXIV. 1797.

Mr. Mainwaring, member for Middlesex, said, he had instructions from his constituents to vote against the bill. Such they declared was the nature of the measure, that, if attempted to be enforced, they must either resist or sink under it.—The bill, after much opposition, finally passed by a majority of 196 to 71 voices.

On its first appearance in the house of lords, January 5, 1798, the bill was strongly opposed by the duke of Bedford. This nobleman observed, that the tax in question was no just criterion of general expenditure. If it *were*, expenditure was no criterion of income, and still less was income a criterion of property. By the provisions of this act, while some persons paid a tenth, others would not contribute a twentieth, or perhaps a fiftieth, of their income. His grace expressed his wishes, notwithstanding, that this plan of raising the supplies within the year had been adopted at the commencement of the war, as it might then have inclined the people to re- 1798.

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flect whether the objects for which they embarked in it were worthy of such exertions and such expences.

Lord Holland, a young nobleman nearly related to Mr. Fox, and appearing to possess a large proportion of his genius and spirit, now speaking for the first time in the house, declared, "that the executive government had been supported in its measures by a complying majority and a confident parliament, which had relied implicitly on the promises of ministers—promises all terminating, after the expenditure of 200 millions, in defeat and disappointment. At the end of five years he was justified in asking what pledge remained for their better conduct in future? Had such a bill been brought forward at the beginning of the war, it might have answered a good purpose, by opening the eyes of the people. But it was deemed more expedient at that time to delude them by assurances that the war would be neither long nor expensive. When the minister had, at the opening of the former session, called for eighteen millions, declaring that sum to be sufficient for the year's expenditure, and at the end of six months demanded as much more, could his assurances be confided in? Of the present bill he must say, that it appeared to him more censurable than the worst of the revolutionary mea-

sures of Robespierre. It was at once intolerable in its pressure, and incompetent to its purpose. He had well considered the dangers which threatened this country, and found none more great than the continuance of the present ministers in office."—The bill passed, on a division, by a majority of sixty-seven voices.

Another great and favorite measure of finance was what the minister styled, very improperly indeed, the redemption of the land-tax; and a plan certainly might have been easily devised, simple, efficacious, and beneficial, for the purpose of utterly extinguishing this odious tax, by a pecuniary commutation. But the minister's plan was no other than a scheme for the perpetuation and sale of the land-tax; making it a species of transferable property—allowing indeed the landed proprietor the privilege of preemption on terms somewhat less disadvantageous than to an absolute stranger. With respect to the mode and terms of the purchase, it was proposed that the payment should not be made in money, but in a transfer of 3 per cent. stock, and that the stock so transferred should produce an annual interest of one fifth, or, in cases where the proprietor was himself the purchaser, one tenth, more than the proportion of land-tax redeemed. The bill passed with inconsiderable opposition; but, from the radical defects of the

Defective plan for the redemption of the land-tax.

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plan, not more than about one fourth of the land-tax was, in the space of three succeeding years, bought up; and the advantage to the public, in point of revenue, has not exceeded the trifling sum of 50,000*l. per annum;* and, as few more purchases can be expected, the project may be considered as having disgracefully failed.

At the same time that the land-tax at 4*s.* in the pound was made perpetual, certain duties, to the amount of that tax, on sugar and tobacco, were made annual; in order that the security which parliament previously possessed against any interruption of their sessions, by an extraordinary and unconstitutional exertion of the prerogative regal, might suffer no diminution.

Voluntary contributions to the war.

A third device set on foot by the minister was that of a voluntary national subscription towards the general defence of the country, now menaced with invasion from a powerful and enraged enemy. All the adherents and partisans of the ministry, and the zealous advocates of the war, of all descriptions, exerting themselves vigorously on this occasion, about one million and a half was raised by this unusual and not very constitutional method. The Bank of England, though still unable to pay their own notes, and in a state apparently approximating to bankruptcy, setting the example to the nation, sub-

scribed the sum of 200,000*l.*—thus making up in generosity what they wanted in justice. The king and queen, after a very long interval of delay, subscribed, the former 20,000*l.* and the latter 5,000*l.* to the national contribution; the amount of which, after all, compared to the general expenditure of the country, was as a drop of water to the ocean.

On the 25th of April the chancellor of the Exchequer, who had so lately professed to bring forward an estimate of expence for the whole year, begged leave to state a small error in his calculation. The loan to be raised must, he said, be fifteen instead of twelve millions. This he had contracted for at the exorbitant rate of 200*l.* 3 per cents. for 100*l.* in money, and about 5*s.* long annuity. But this was not the worst. The principle upon which the late war-tax, styled the Triple Assessment, was founded, being in the progress of the bill demonstrated the most unequal and unjust, so many modifications and abatements had been admitted into it, that Mr. Pitt now thought proper to state the amount at four millions and a half only. And eight millions being raised on the credit of it, exclusive of the produce of the present year, it appeared that this pretended war-tax must last at all events two years after the war, supposing a peace concluded at the end of the year. For

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the remaining seven millions, taxes were to be provided, which, with a large increase of navy-debt, amounting to about four millions, required the sum of 763,000*l.* in addition to the annual burdens already sustained by the public. And thus terminated the first great effort of this vaunting minister, to introduce a new and SOLID SYSTEM of FINANCE—an effort which imposed upon the nation temporary taxes, for three years, to the amount of four millions and a half; perpetual taxes to the amount of nearly 800,000*l.*; and which created a new additional capital of forty-four millions of debt for twenty-two millions actually paid into the public Exchequer.

Invasion threatened by France.

Though a message had early in the year been sent from the king to the two houses, stating the preparations making by the enemy for the invasion of these kingdoms, and soliciting the attention of parliament to the subject, it was some time before any regular plan could be matured for the national defence. At length, Mr. Dundas moved for the introduction of a bill, to enable his majesty to call out a certain portion of the supplementary militia; and, after an interval of some weeks, for a second bill, to enable his majesty to take measures for the more effectual security of these realms, and to indemnify persons who might suffer injury in their property

Vigorous preparations for the national defence.

by the operation of such measures. This bill, which contained a great variety of regulations, proper and necessary to be adopted in case of actual invasion, was received with very general approbation. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

A third bill was brought into the house by Mr. Secretary Dundas, to revive the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act, which, when a rebellion was impending in one kingdom, and an invasion in the other, could not be objected to. The chancellor of the Exchequer, upon this occasion, declared, that at no former period of the war were the preparations of the enemy for a descent upon this country so ripe, so extensive, or so truly alarming, as at the present crisis. The French government, freed from the perplexities and struggles in which it had been involved, by the military exertions of the continental powers, was now at liberty to employ its troops directly against us. Some difference of opinion took place respecting the duration of the suspension, but it was at length fixed for the 1st of February.

The alarm of invasion not only continuing, but increasing, and the French having by this time assembled a vast force on the opposite side of the channel, the chancellor of the Exchequer, on the 25th of May, moved for a bill for the more effectual manning of the navy. The chief

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object he had in view was the temporary suspension of protections, and it was his wish that the bill should that day pass through its different stages in that house, and be sent up to the lords for their concurrence. Mr. Tierney expressed his belief that the augmentation of the navy might be provided for in the usual way. No arguments had been offered to prove the propriety of such an extraordinary deviation from the common practice of that house; nor was he prepared to give three or four votes without some deliberation and reflection in favor of a bill which, like all the other measures of ministry, he considered as decidedly hostile to the liberty of the subject.

Mr. Pitt rose in great warmth, and said, "that if every measure adopted against the designs of France was to be considered as hostile to the liberties of this country, then indeed his idea of liberty differed widely from that of the honorable gentleman. Were the present bill not passed in a day, it was obvious that those whom it concerned might elude its effects: but if the measure was necessary, and that a previous notice would render it inefficient, how could the honorable gentleman's opposition to it be accounted for, but from a desire to obstruct the defence of the country?"—Mr. Tierney now rose, and called the chancellor of the Exchequer to

order: and the Speaker interposing, with that dignified impartiality which on all occasions marked his conduct, observed, that whatever had a tendency to throw suspicion on the sentiments of a member, if conveyed in language that clearly marked such intention, was certainly irregular. This the house would judge of, but they would wait to hear the honorable gentleman's explanation. Mr. Pitt replied, "that if the house waited for his explanation, he feared it must wait a long time. He submitted what he had said to the judgment of the house, and would not depart from any thing he had advanced, by either retracting or explaining his words."—This peremptory refusal to explain a most unparliamentary and injurious expression, a refusal no less disrespectful to the house than unjust to Mr. Tierney, occasioned a sudden silence; and no person having the presence of mind to move a resolution of censure upon the minister, Mr. Tierney immediately left the house. The consequence was, that a challenge was sent from that gentleman to Mr. Pitt, and a duel fought between them on the ensuing Sunday; when two cases of pistols being discharged without effect, Mr. Pitt firing his last pistol in the air, the matter was accommodated by the respective seconds.

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Duel between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Tierney.

The bill in question having passed through all

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its stages, the chancellor of the Exchequer proposed that it should commence from the 24th *of May*, instant. This was objected to by Mr. Wigley, who, with good reason, thought it a most unjustifiable thing in itself, as well as dangerous in precedent, to make any law which should operate in an *ex-post-facto* manner. The objection nevertheless was over-ruled, and the bill, with its odious appendage, finally passed into an act on the same day. Certainly, in every country, *ex-post-facto* laws are the most iniquitous, and, in a free country, the most hateful and heterogeneous of things. Whence! from what legitimate source, is this power derived, of subjecting men to the operation of laws before those laws began to exist,—by an infernal device thus binding their victims in an invisible necromantic chain?

Motion of Mr. Wilberforce for the abolition of the slave-trade.

In the course of the session, Mr. Wilberforce again renewed his unfortunate motion for the Abolition of the Slave-Trade. It was supported in two very eloquent speeches, each excellent in its way, by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox; the latter of whom, influenced by his native generosity and humanity, would not absent himself from this discussion. "The great plea (Mr. Pitt remarked) for the continuance of the slave-trade was the necessity of a free importation, in order to enable the planter to bring his waste lands into

cultivation. To what did this reasoning tend? In the last hundred years the cultivation of land in Jamaica had increased, until about one third of the island had been cleared. For this 250,000 slaves had not more than sufficed. Of consequence, for the cultivation of the remaining two thirds, half a million more slaves would be necessary. This is the number which must be imported, with all the frightful waste of mortality with which, as experience had fatally evinced, such importation would be attended. And as a corresponding length of time would be requisite for the conversion of the lands now waste as for those in actual cultivation, the period of the final abolition would be protracted for the term of two hundred years. The interest of the West-India islands themselves, nay, the safety of those islands, which the motion before the house was said by some to endanger, absolutely required and demanded the immediate abolition of this commerce. It had been said, that, as this trade was encouraged by the legislature, the abolition would be unjust toward those who had acted upon the faith of the existing laws. But was it not known to those who made the objection, that the legislature often bestowed encouragement upon branches of commerce which in different circumstances it was deemed prudent to withdraw? No partial inconvenience ought to

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weigh against the indisputed principle of justice, and against the general interests and safety of the islands themselves, which it was the duty of that house to guard, whether it was or was not understood by the parties concerned in the discussion.

Mr. Fox, in a high strain of eloquence, declared it to be a matter of shame and lamentation that the country should be so degenerate from every sense of virtue, so sunk in hypocrisy, that, however convinced of the enormity of the wickedness, they had not yet abandoned that course which they agreed so unanimously to condemn. It had been alleged, that we ought not to judge of this commerce from the cruelty of individuals engaged in it. But such is the nature of man, that the idea of possessing unlimited authority, so far from inspiring tenderness, produces contempt of the object as worthless. If man had not been cruel, slavery itself could not have had existence. He would not, for one, trust to any local regulations of the colonial legislatures, as had been recommended, but would vote for a direct and immediate abolition of a trade which the house had already condemned as inconsistent with justice and morality, and which, he agreed with the minister, was equally incompatible with good policy and the permanent safety of our West-India possessions. Upon this occasion, the house, momentarily impressed with

a sense of moral and political duty, was almost persuaded to be just, the motion being negatived by a majority of four voices only, in a house of 175 members.

Address to the throne moved by the duke of Bedford.

The proceedings in parliament during the whole of this session were of a very momentous nature. On the 22d of March, the duke of Bedford, at the close of a very able speech, moved an address to the throne, humbly stating to his majesty the urgent and indispensable necessity which existed of employing other ministers, and adopting other councils.—"Instructed as we are"—such is the language of this excellent address—"by a long series of events, and corrected by experience, we are bound by our duty, and compelled by necessity, to submit to his majesty our humble opinion, that the situation of the country is too critical, and the dangers that surround it are too serious, to admit of any further trial of the same counsels which have constantly failed, or of the same persons for whose continuance in office, notwithstanding the heavy and unanswered charges which have been brought against them, even themselves have nothing to plead but a feeble unavailing rectitude of intention, constantly overpowered by the superior policy and vigor of the enemy, or a pretended apprehension, equally false and malignant, of the designs of those whom his ma-

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jesty might appoint to succeed them in the administration of public affairs."—In the course of his speech, this distinguished nobleman took occasion to declare that he held a parliamentary reform to be essential to the salvation of the state; and, however he might have been calumniated as an eager and ambitious candidate for power, he pledged himself never to make one of any administration with which parliamentary reform was not a leading object; and that, if this measure failed, he would not continue in office. Yet he allowed there might be men of talents and integrity, perfectly well qualified for the first offices of the state, who would not consider parliamentary reform as a necessary ingredient in their system; and, so long as they acted for the public advantage, they should have his support.—In allusion to the threatened invasion, his grace declared it must be obvious to every man, that, if the French succeeded, we should be the most degraded of nations. No rational person could, for a moment, believe that they who oppose administration would abet the designs of an invading enemy,—that they who have constantly contended for the liberties of their countrymen, would join an enemy whose avowed object is to destroy them. What then can we think of ministers when we see them encouraging these base calumnies? It is certain

no man can take any share in opposition to the measures of administration without being thus stigmatized.—"My lords, (said the noble speaker) determined as I am, never, by any act of mine, to contribute to the continuance of the present war, still, if we are attacked by the enemy, I will be among the foremost to maintain the liberties of my country against all oppressors, tyrants, and invaders.—Never will I fight for the present ministers; for I know of no more decided enemies to their country and their king than they are. I may for the moment suspend my opposition to them, but it will be only for a moment. When I return, I return as decided a foe to them as ever. I abhor their conduct, I detest their principles, and against the system upon which they have acted I vow eternal enmity. If ever an unmanly timidity should make me enter into an alliance with them, if ever base fear should induce me to join with them in oppressing my country, may the just indignation of the people pursue me! may the detestation of the world be my lot! and may the great Creator pour down his heaviest curses upon my apostate head!" The motion of address, after a long and vehement debate, was negatived by a majority of 100 voices. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

It was impossible that the alarming state of Ireland should not excite very uneasy apprehen-

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sions; although, since the recognition of the national independence of that kingdom and its legislature, it was difficult to bring any question relative to Irish affairs in a manner perfectly regular before the British parliament. Early in the session, and previous to the Christmas recess, however, the earl of Moira, a nobleman of great property, influence, and popularity, in that kingdom, and member of both legislatures, deeming points of form to be wholly subordinate to those grand objects for which government itself was ordained and constituted, thought it indispensably necessary to renew the motion made by him in the preceding session for an address to the king respecting the situation of Ireland. This nobleman observed, that "he had unavailingly called the attention of the house last year to the state of that country, and had in vain predicted the consequences which the system of government established there must inevitably produce. The necessity of interposition was now become more urgent. All confidence, all security, were taken away. No one could say who would be the next victim of the oppression and cruelty which he saw others endure. The greatest and most wanton barbarities had been committed; but he wished, from prudential motives, to draw a veil over these aggravated enormities. He entreated the house to take into serious con-

Debates on the state of Ireland.

sideration the tendency of the present measures, which, instead of removing discontents, had increased the number of the discontented. The moment of conciliation was not yet passed; but, if the system were not changed, he feared that Ireland would be lost to this country for ever." BOOK XXIV. 1798.

The motion was opposed by lord Grenville, and the lord-chancellor, who asserted that it was of a nature particularly unfit for the discussion of that house, as their lordships had no *authentic* information of the grievances of Ireland, in the first place; and no power to redress them, if existing, in the second. They could not pass an opinion upon them regularly; nor attempt to act, without subverting law and counteracting authority. Times of imminent danger required vigorous exertions; but no one could say that the administration of justice had ever been interrupted; nor ought any insinuations to be thrown out against the parliament of Ireland, as if that assembly were deficient in their care for the welfare and the interests of their country.—The question of adjournment was then put and carried.

Before the end of this session, nevertheless, the general state of affairs in Ireland became such as to force itself again upon the notice of parliament. On the 26th of March, the earl of Moira once more drew the attention of the

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house, by stating, "that he had the affidavits of a hundred persons in his possession, to prove that torture had been employed in forcing confessions from individuals, against themselves and against their neighbours; that horrible devastations had been made on the houses and property of persons accused of disaffection. The deponents were ready to come forward at the bar of the house with their testimonies; but he wished to avoid whatever might tend to exasperate; he should therefore content himself with placing his affidavits in the hands of the noble lord on the wool-sack."—The marquis of Downshire entered into an elaborate vindication of the conduct of the executive government in Ireland; to which, when lord Moira rose to reply, he was called to order by lord Carnarvon, who urged the impropriety and danger of so irregular a conversation; and, offering to explain, the duke of Athol moved an adjournment of the house.

On the 15th of June, Ireland being now a scene of carnage and horror, the duke of Leinster, a nobleman of the highest rank and respectability in that kingdom, and a peer also of Great Britain, after a speech, in the course of which his feelings appeared deeply agitated, moved an address to his majesty, humbly requesting "that his majesty would deign to di-

rect the proper officer to lay before this house a full and ample statement of the facts and circumstances which had led to the disastrous affairs of Ireland, and of the measures which had hitherto been pursued for the purpose of averting such momentous evils. That, however alarming the discontents now prevailing in the sister-kingdom were, we would not despair; but that the result of such discussion would enable us to assist his majesty, according to our constitutional duty, with some well-adapted remedy, such as might restore, in that distracted part of the British empire, confidence in the laws by due administration of them, obedience to his majesty's government by a temperate use of its powers, and union amongst all descriptions of persons in that kingdom."

A long and animated debate ensued, in which the motion was supported by the dukes of Norfolk, Bedford, Devonshire, and Leeds, the earls of Suffolk, Moira, Fitzwilliam, and Besborough, and lord Holland; and opposed by the lords Townshend, Carlisle, Grenville, Spencer, and the lord-chancellor. On the division there appeared, contents 18, not-contents 51.—A strong protest was signed by the dissentient peers.

Upon the same day, lord George Cavendish, after a short and emphatic speech, introduced into the house of commons the following series

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of resolutions, as proper and necessary to be adopted by that house for the salvation of Ireland:

"1. That whenever this house is called upon for supplies of men or money, to be provided by levies and taxes on our constituents, it is our right and duty to watch over and control the purposes to which they are to be applied.

"2. That this house is ready to make every exertion in its power to enable his majesty to subdue all rebellion against his lawful authority —trusting he will temper severity with mercy, and never lose sight of that equitable policy which, by the redress of real grievances, may secure to him the loyalty and affection of his people.

"3. That although we shall be ready at all times, by all just means, to maintain the unity of the British empire, and our connexion with Ireland as a part of it, yet we never can believe it is the wish of his majesty to support the principle of governing that country as a conquered and hostile country—a principle no less contrary to justice than to the interests of the two kingdoms.

"4. That it is the duty of the ministers to advise his majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to repeat the recommendation which he made through the lord-lieutenant of Ireland to

that kingdom in 1793, seriously to consider the situation of the Irish Catholics, and to consider it with liberality, for the purpose of cementing general union amongst his majesty's subjects in support of the established constitution.

"5. That such persons as have expressed their disapprobation of measures of concession, and under whose administration Ireland has been reduced to a situation so imminently dangerous to the interests and happiness of the empire, cannot be effectual channels of his majesty's royal grace and beneficent intentions towards their fellow-subjects."

These excellent resolutions were seconded by lord John Russel; and it was pleasing to those attached to the ancient system of Whigism in this country, to see the illustrious names of Russel and Cavendish combined in opposition to those fatal measures which had reduced the British empire to the very verge of destruction. After a long debate, from which, as from that in the upper house, strangers were punctiliously excluded—the ministry, like the foolish ostrich, thus hiding its head with a view to avert the danger—the order of the day was carried by a majority of 146 voices—the numbers being 66 to 212.

Mr. Fox, who attended in his place upon this great occasion, then moved the following propo-

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sition: "That this house, understanding it to be a matter of notoriety that the system of coercion had been enforced in Ireland with a rigor shocking to humanity,—and, particularly, that scourges and other tortures had been employed to extort confessions,—is of opinion, that an immediate stop should be put to practices so disgraceful to the British name; and that our hopes of restoring tranquillity to Ireland must arise from a change of system as far as relates to the executive government, together with a removal from their stations of those persons by whose advice those atrocities have been perpetrated, and towards whom the people of Ireland can feel no sentiments but of resentment and terror."—This, after a second debate, was negatived by nearly the same majority, the numbers being 62 to 204 voices.

Twelve regiments of English militia sent to Ireland.

On the 19th of June, a message from the king was delivered, acquainting the house, that various regiments of the militia of this kingdom had made a voluntary tender of their services to be employed for the suppression of the rebellion in Ireland. An address of thanks being moved by Mr. Dundas, preparatory to the introduction of a bill empowering his majesty to accept the offers of such regiments, a vehement debate arose. Mr. Nichols said, "that if the address were adopted, the principle of the Militia Bill,

as originally established, would be completely abandoned. The measure besides would be unjust to those who, wholly unsuspicious of any such intention, had entered, *bona fide*, into the militia service. The house, moreover," he added, "ought to be fully acquainted with the merits of the question before they proceeded to give their support to the executive government, and fully to ascertain the causes of the discontent which had driven that unfortunate country into the present unnatural contest." 1798.

Mr. Lawrence Palk and Mr. Pierrepoint, gentlemen not usually found in the ranks of opposition, contended against the measure as a most gross and flagrant violation of the constitution.

Mr. Banks expressed his apprehension "that if the principle of sending the militia to Ireland, or to any place out of the realm, were once admitted, there was no species of warfare in which they might not be employed:" and he moved an amendment to the address, importing, "that the house considered the proposition suggested in his majesty's speech as of the utmost consequence, and such as required farther deliberation."

Mr. Tierney declared, "that the minister ought to come down to the house clothed in sackcloth and ashes when he had such a propo-

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sition to make as the present. There was no official communication to that house even of the existence of a rebellion in Ireland, but in the message calling upon them to take this important and unconstitutional step in order to suppress it. The militia was a part of the constitution: where was a substitute to be found for this body? The tenor of the oath was to serve faithfully in Great Britain."

Sir William Pulteney said, "he was afraid that sending the militia was now unavoidable; but this was no excuse for those who brought us into the embarrassment." The house then divided: in favor of the amendment 47, against it 118. The bill finally passed, after much angry contention and opposition in both houses.

Patriotic spirit displayed by the British nation.

The kingdom being thus left destitute of its natural and constitutional defence, under the impending and imminent apprehension of an invasion, the spirit of military ardor seemed at once to seize and pervade the whole kingdom; and all ranks and orders of men, whether friendly or adverse to the measures of the existing administration, eagerly formed themselves into volunteer corps, commanded by officers of their own choice acting under temporary commissions from the king, till England presented to her fierce and formidable foe the glorious picture of an armed nation inspired with the magnanimous

resolution of sacrificing their lives in defence of their country. From this grand spectacle France, which had hitherto cherished the delusive idea that she had numerous partisans and adherents in Great Britain, shrunk back astonished and appalled; and the British ministry themselves at length were compelled reluctantly to acknowledge, that there were persons of whom it might be truly said, that they were at the same time enemies to them and friends to their country. * 1798.

The session of parliament closed June 29, 1798; and the king in his speech took especial and handsome notice of the heroic spirit by

* By that extremely insignificant and criminal faction, of Jacobinical and Painite republicans, who maintained a traitorous correspondence with France, there can be no doubt that the French government was most grossly duped and imposed upon, in respect to the general state of parties and opinions in Great Britain.—"Councils grounded upon foreign advice,"—says a certain, now almost forgotten, writer of the last century, who was a sagacious observer of men and things—"or any thing but a visible experience, do rarely succeed. For interest, in such as desire a change, doth not seldom make them apprehend more advantages than really there are, and cover doubts and dangers they are privy to, out of a fear to dishearten the prince they endeavour to embark in their defence. As it fell out here, where not one man appeared in favor of the Spaniards—the very Papists themselves being no less unwilling than the rest to see their native country in subjection to the ordinary cruelties found in strangers." OSBORNE'S *Essays*.

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which the nation was now universally animated. "The example of your firmness and constancy," said the monarch to the two houses of parliament, "has been applauded and followed by my subjects in every rank and condition in life. A spirit of voluntary and ardent exertion, diffused through every part of the kingdom, has strengthened and confirmed our internal security; the same sentiments have continued to animate my troops of every description; and my fleets have met the menaces of invasion by blocking up all our enemies in their principal ports."

Affairs of Ireland investigated.

It is now highly requisite to take a general view of that state of affairs in Ireland which excited such great and just alarm in the parliament and ministry of Great Britain. Certain it is, that from the æra of the first acquisition of Ireland by the English, in the reign of Henry II. to the present time, the Irish nation, if by the nation is meant the bulk of the people, were never reconciled to the English government. They were indeed considered by England, and they considered themselves, as a conquered people: they regarded the English government as a yoke, which it was not only lawful but meritorious to throw off, whenever they had the power and the opportunity. The general and obstinate resistance made by the Irish nation in

the reign, to go no further back, of queen Elizabeth, of Charles I. and of king William, to the whole power of England, affords irrefragable demonstration of this grand truth. In consequence of the immense confiscations which succeeded the suppression of these three rebellions, almost the whole landed property of the kingdom was transferred to the English settlers and their descendants, who formed as it were a distinct colony in Ireland, a nation within a nation, differing in manners, customs, language, and religion; and in whom—as the Irish Catholics were deprived of the privileges of the constitution, and under a legal proscription—not only the whole property, but the whole political power and influence of the country, was for a long succession of years exclusively vested. "At Clonnell, near Castlereagh," says a well-known modern writer, "lives O'Connor, the direct descendant of Roderic O'Connor, king of Connaught 700 years ago. His monument, with the ensigns of royalty, is in Roscommon church. This family has suffered more in the revolution of ages than the O'Neils and O'Bryens. The common people, however, pay him great respect, and consider him as the prince of a people involved in one common ruin *."

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* *Vide* ARTHUR YOUNG'S 'Tour to Ireland.'

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The English colony in Ireland, or, adopting the phrase formerly in use, "the English settlers within the pale," bearing no proportion in numbers to the genuine native Irish, were compelled to depend entirely upon the government of England for support. The Irish legislature therefore readily, if not willingly, submitted to the supreme authority assumed by the parliament of England as the price of their security. Or if they ever shewed a disposition to contest this legislative superiority, as in the reigns of king William and king George I. the resistance was neither very serious nor permanent. From the accession of the House of Hanover, although the laws against popery, till a recent period, suffered no relaxation, the government of the country was administered in the spirit of mildness. The civilization of the inhabitants and the commercial industry of the community increased; improvements of all kinds made great and rapid advances; and the Catholics participated, however unequally, in the general prosperity—losing gradually their attachment to the banished house of Stuart, and acquiring with the increasing liberality of the times additional degrees of light and knowledge. After centuries of unabated animosity, the Catholics and Protestants seemed at length to *begin* to consider themselves as having a common and national interest di-

stinct from that of England. The loyalty discovered by the Irish Catholics during the unfortunate disputes with America, and the desire of preserving and increasing that attachment, combined with a sense doubtless of the injustice of the laws under which they suffered, induced the government here from time to time to exert its influence in the Irish legislature, to grant them such relief as they were deemed entitled or qualified to receive: and every new acquisition of liberty, or exemption from oppression, confirmed and strengthened the impression of a common and national interest. The Irish legislature itself seemed to encourage the pleasing and patriotic idea; and seeing the great distress and embarrassment of England during the last years of the American war, Ireland eagerly embraced the golden opportunity to extort from her, first the grant of a free trade, and then the recognition of her political independence.

In making these demands the Irish parliament felt itself supported by the voice of the whole nation—the interest of the Catholics being no less concerned than that of the Protestants in the one, and their national pride no less gratified by the other. But no sooner had these two grand points been carried by the aid and powerful concurrence of the Catholics, than they reverted with keener sensibility to those severe

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unrepealed laws which still placed them, as they conceived, out of the pale of the constitution *. They now, therefore, bent all their efforts to obtain a radical reform of the representation; which, as they justly believed, would lead to a total abolition of the existing penal statutes. But the Irish parliament, which had no longer any cause of contention with England, received their applications with the highest degree of jealousy and aversion. Whither this radical reform would ultimately tend was indeed too obvious not to excite the spirit of determined resistance in the legislatures of both countries, who trembled at the apprehension of a serious investigation of the subsisting abuses in church and state: and, should a majority of Catholics be elected in consequence of this reform, the very existence of the Protestant government

* "The declared object of the popery laws" (says Mr. Burke, in his letter to sir Hercules Langrishe,) "was to reduce the Catholics of Ireland to a miserable populace, without property, without estimation, without education.—They divided the nation into two distinct bodies, without common interest, sympathy, or connexion. The old code was a complete system full of coherence and consistency, well digested, and well composed, in all its parts; it was a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance; and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man." P. 86-87.

and Protestant establishment in Ireland would be endangered. Though some concessions were made therefore in subordinate matters, every motion brought forward in parliament for a reform in the representation was rejected by vast majorities—the influence of the executive government being in perfect unison on this point with the inclinations, fears, and prejudices, of the legislative body. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

In consequence of their repeated disappointments, the Irish Catholics remained in a state of extreme dissatisfaction, and almost despondency, till the great event of the French revolution inspired them with new hopes and fresh courage. The just and noble principles of government promulgated by the Constituent Assembly, so congenial to the feelings of an oppressed and persecuted people, were eagerly and enthusiastically embraced by the Catholics of Ireland; as well as by that large proportion of the Irish Protestants who dissented from the established church,—a great and respectable class of men, who were formerly for the most part adverse to the claims of the Catholics, but who were now the avowed and zealous defenders of their equity and justice.

In the year 1791 the famous society of United Irishmen was formed, which professed to have in view the abolition of all legal tests and pro-

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scriptions; the entire emancipation of the Catholics; and a radical reform in parliament;—and there exists not the least proof or presumption that the views of the society at its first institution, or for several years afterward, extended beyond these professions, whatever might be the concealed design of individuals. The governments of both kingdoms nevertheless continued still as inimical as ever both to the reform in parliament and the complete emancipation of the Catholics.

Such was the state of things when Great Britain, against every rule of good policy, and even of common sense, entered into the confederacy against France. As it was now of the utmost importance that the spirit of discontent in Ireland should not be suffered to arise to disaffection, the famous Catholic Toleration Bill was introduced into the Irish Parliament in the session of 1793, under the sanction of government, and on the express recommendation of the sovereign. This bill, in its passage through the two houses, was much cramped and limited in its operation by the spirit of bigotry and folly: when passed, it was perceived to fall extremely short of its professed object; and the Catholics, displeased and disappointed, declared loudly that nothing less would satisfy them than a complete emancipation and admission to all the pri-

vileges of the constitution. To this claim the English government, whose intentions respecting the Catholics had not been fulfilled by the late bill, appeared to hearken with favorable attention: and, at the close of the year 1794, earl Fitzwilliam was appointed lord-lieutenant of Ireland, with full powers, as he himself, and the whole kingdom of Ireland, understood, to carry the plan of emancipation into effect.—That thus much might have been conceded with the most perfect safety, and that the most beneficial consequences would have resulted from it, there cannot exist the shadow of a reasonable doubt: and that the spirit of conciliation and of wisdom might have happily compromised the remaining difficulties, relative to parliamentary reform and the ecclesiastical establishment, is scarcely more problematical. But by some indiscreet and premature dismissals from office, lord Fitzwilliam alarmed the whole body of "king's friends," "Tories," and "Swiss of State," who would most probably have conformed to any plan, however favorable to liberty and liberality (that is, in other words, however contrary to their own prejudices and inclinations), had they been allowed to retain their places. But the immediate consequence of the too daring attack of lord Fitzwilliam upon this formidable phalanx was the peremptory recal of his lordship, the

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reinstatement of the displaced courtiers, and the grief, rage, and ruin, of the country.

This virtuous and patriotic nobleman was succeeded in the government of Ireland, as has been already related, by the earl of Camden; under whose disastrous administration, disaffection and oppression, each operating alternately as the efficient cause of the other, were soon carried to a most alarming and terrible height. In the month of March 1796 was passed the famous Insurrection Act, empowering the magistrates in any county or district to proclaim it out of the king's peace; and consequently to subject the wretched inhabitants, at their discretion, or, in other words, their pleasure, to military law, under colour of which the most horrible outrages were perpetrated.

Nevertheless, to the conclusion of that year, the Catholics still flattered themselves that a change of system would take place in their favor; and when the French attempted an invasion in the month of December, the whole kingdom, Catholics and Protestants, forgetting for the time their contentions and animosities, displayed only an emulation of ardor in the national defence,—as the lord-lieutenant himself acknowledged in his official dispatches. But the patience and forbearance of the Catholics were at length exhausted; and the government, still

shewing itself proudly and obstinately hostile to their humble claims, they suddenly and totally altered their whole plan of policy; and, in despair of obtaining justice at home, they entered into dark and dangerous intrigues with the French government, which a short time matured into a secret and treasonable conspiracy, by the aid and assistance of that hostile power, to subvert the existing constitution of their country, and to dissolve for ever its connexion with Britain. 1798.

Although the impolicy of the English government in raising the hopes of the Irish Catholics to the highest pitch by the appointment of lord Fitzwilliam, and then dashing the cup of expectation from their lips by his sudden recal, is so egregious as to admit of no extenuation, it by no means follows that the revolt of the Irish Catholics, in actual circumstances, was to be vindicated upon any true principles of reason. To whatever motives it might be ascribed, no one could controvert the fact that the present reign had been to the Catholics a reign of indulgence and concession. By the last act of toleration, they wanted, comparatively, but little of being restored to the perfect enjoyment of *civil liberty;* and as the current upon the whole ran in their favor, notwithstanding some occasional and temporary disappointments, there is

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good ground to believe that, had they conducted themselves with temper and moderation, they would ultimately have succeeded in their attempts to be restored to their rights as men and citizens in their fullest extent—to their political as well as civil existence. After the act of 1793 they suffered under no positive oppression; their grievances were thenceforth negative only: and surely it is not every error in government, it is not every refusal to comply with a claim in itself just and equitable, that will justify resistance, or authorize an appeal to arms. Obedience to the magistrate is the general rule of duty not to be departed from but on great and extraordinary occasions, and upon urgent motives, such as can never be pleaded in defence or extenuation of the Irish revolt of 1798.

And to view this transaction in another light, it may be pronounced no less rash and imprudent than immoral and unjust. The number of those who had entered into the association of United Irishmen, who had sworn fidelity to the rules of the institution, and who had been led on, step by step, to engage in this conspiracy against the government, was indeed prodigious; but still the power both of the sword and the purse, that most potent of all combinations, was in the hands of the Protestants: and, in case of necessity, the government of Ireland would, no

doubt, be supported by the mighty force of Britain. The Irish Catholics must therefore be reduced to an absolute dependence upon France in order to establish their visionary independency. But what scenes of carnage and of horror must the wretched inhabitants of Ireland witness before the existing government could be subverted by the aid of such an ally! And even supposing the object itself attained, did the conduct of France in other countries afford them any rational ground of expectancy that she would act upon principles of equity, moderation, and generosity, to Ireland? What had been her policy in Belgium, in Lombardy, in Venice? Even Holland, the only country where the French had appeared to observe any bounds or limits of moderation, was degraded to the rank of a dependent province;—and such, no doubt, would have been the fate of Ireland, had she succeeded in her wild and romantic project of separating herself from Great Britain.

So early as the year 1794, the French government had, for the purpose of acquiring intelligence, sent, as an agent into these kingdoms, one Jackson, a native of Ireland, of the clerical profession, who came to England recommended, as far as appears, to no other person than a Mr. Stone, merchant, at Old-ford near London, whose brother, a violent democrat, but a man

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of some parts and plausibility, had a few years before removed to Paris in order to enjoy the blessings of French liberty. The merchant Stone, a man to the last degree weak and vain, received this dangerous friend with much hospitality, taking pains, in their frequent conferences upon the state of affairs, to convince him of the impolicy and impracticability of any attempt upon England: and to corroborate his own opinion, he obtained from divers highly respectable persons, to whom he had occasional access, their verbal or written sentiments to the same effect —boasting in lofty terms the great service he should be able, in consequence of the communication he held with his brother in France, to render to this country. On applying, however, to Mr. Sheridan, he received very properly for answer, "that he would neither receive any information nor give any opinion; and that whatever he had to disclose ought to be addressed to the secretary of state, Mr. Dundas, who would judge of the importance of it."—Upon the whole, Jackson being convinced that the project of an invasion of England was hopeless, repaired to Ireland, where he still continued his correspondence with Stone; both writing under feigned names, and in terms of confidence which shewed, on the part of Stone, to say the least, inconceivable indiscretion. The correspondence

being intercepted by government, both Jackson and Stone were in a short time apprehended on a charge of high-treason; and the former was convicted on the most decisive evidence. When brought up for sentence, however, he fell down suddenly, and expired before it could be pronounced. Stone, after a long confinement, was also tried; but the evidence being by no means clear, and his intentions, with respect to England at least, appearing upon the whole innocent, and even laudable, he was, by the candor of the jury, acquitted of the treason imputed to him, and soon afterwards followed his brother to France.

Immediately on the conviction of Jackson, Mr. Theobald Wolfe Tone, accounted the original founder of the society of United Irishmen, Mr. Hamilton Rowan, and some other distinguished members of that association, who even thus early had formed deep designs against the existing government, thought it necessary to abscond.

At the commencement of the year 1795, lord Fitzwilliam went over with powers which—had he been fortunately suffered to act upon them —would, beyond all question, have completely tranquillised the nation. On his departure, things soon began to wear a most serious aspect; and the society of United Irishmen received an important accession of men of parts

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and influence;—amongst others, the celebrated Arthur O'Connor, who had distinguished himself as a zealous partisan of the measures proposed by lord Fitzwilliam. Dr. M'Nevin, chairman of the Catholic committee; and Mr. Oliver Bond, an opulent merchant of Dublin. The general views of the society at this time seem to have been lawful and just: but those of the leaders went certainly much farther, and very dangerous lengths. Though parliamentary reform, Catholic emancipation, and the abolition of tythes, were still the professed objects, they appeared from this period to address themselves much more to the passions than to the judgment of the people at large; and to exert unwearied pains to diffuse opinions calculated to re-kindle in all its ancient fury the immortal hatred between the Catholic and Protestant sects—representing to the former the dreadful injuries inflicted upon their ancestors by the latter, of which the Catholics yet felt the grievous effect; and it has been upon high authority affirmed, that in the province of Leinster, the common people, at first averse to the measures proposed to them, were terrified into an active concurrence, in consequence of being assured by the emissaries of treason that it was necessary in their own defence, as their Protestant fellow-subjects had entered into a solemn league

and covenant to destroy them, having sworn to wade up to their knees in popish blood*. BOOK XXIV.

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At the conclusion of this year (1795) a regular communication was opened by the leaders of the society with the French Directory, through the medium of Mr. Wolfe Tone and other Irish refugees. And early in the following year a proposition was received from the French government, that an army should be sent over to Ireland to assist in the projected effort to subvert the monarchy, and to separate Ireland from the British connection. The proposition was accepted by the secret committee of the society, which had now extended itself over the whole kingdom, being regularly organized into primary assemblies, a certain number of delegates from which composed what they styled the baronial committee—whence a second delegation formed the county committee. Delegates in the same manner from the county committees constituted the provincial committee; and the provincial committees made choice of five persons, who composed the national committee, styling themselves the Irish Executive Directory, whose orders were implicitly obeyed by the members of the union throughout the whole kingdom.

Irish Catholics engage in a criminal intercourse with France.

* 'Report of the Irish House of Lords, A.D. 1799.'

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In the summer of 1796, lord Edward Fitzgerald, brother to the duke of Leinster, and a zealous leader of the association, in company with Mr. Arthur O'Connor, both members of the Irish Directory, repaired to the continent, and, proceeding to Switzerland, held a conference near the French frontier with general Hoche, in which the plan of the invasion was finally adjusted. The causes which rendered that expedition abortive have been already narrated; but the loyalty displayed on that occasion by the Irish commonalty clearly proves that the Irish and French Directories had greatly miscalculated concerning the general disposition of the people at this juncture. The Irish leaders appeared, however, extremely resolute in the prosecution of their criminal designs; and the alliance with France became, in consequence of this failure, only the more firmly cemented. One Lewins was nominated resident minister of the IRISH REPUBLIC at Paris; and, in the summer of 1797, an ambassador extraordinary, Dr. M'Nevin, a member of the Irish executive directory, was deputed to Paris to make the necessary arrangements for a second invasion. The French government avoided returning any definitive answer till the issue of the negotiation at Lisle was determined; on the rupture of which they were lavish in their assurances of speedy and effectual support.

Two armaments, one from Holland, the other from France, were destined to sail nearly at the same time for Ireland; but the total defeat of the Dutch fleet under Admiral De Winter by lord Duncan entirely disconcerted this second plan,—the French government, depending upon this co-operation, not choosing to risque the safety of their own fleet by permitting it to put to sea from Brest after this unlooked-for disaster. Thus the favorable moment was lost: for things were now come to a crisis; and the project of insurrection, if executed at all, could no longer be deferred. 1798.

Notwithstanding the mutual assurances of regard and fraternity which passed between the two directories, it is certain that great jealousies subsisted on the part of Ireland at least, and not without good reason, of the secret designs of the French government, which were suspected to aim at the ultimate subjection of the sister republic. Lord Edward Fitzgerald and other chiefs of the Irish union, absurdly confident in their own strength, were desirous of limiting the assistance of France to 10,000 men and 40,000 stand of arms. But the French, who were not deceived in the magnitude of the undertaking, declared an army of 50,000 men to be requisite in order to establish the *independency* and *liberty* of Ireland. They engaged,

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however, to send such succours as circumstances would admit in aid of the intended insurrection, and which would arrive in Ireland at the end of April or the beginning of May*.

Dreadful situation of the kingdom.

At the commencement of the year 1798, a grand effort was resolved upon. In the month of February a military commission was appointed by the executive council, and instructions issued to the adjutants-general. Nocturnal assemblies were held in all parts of the kingdom, where the people were trained to the use of arms. The boldest depredations were made, the most unqualified menaces thrown out, and every thing seemed to presage the near approach of a dreadful explosion. On the other hand, where the king's troops and the Orange volunteer corps prevailed, the most horrid barbarities were practised upon the persons, and the most shocking ravages committed upon the properties, of the associated Irishmen; and it seemed to be the policy of government to irritate and provoke them into a premature revolt.

Conciliatory proposition of the earl of Moira.

The earl of Moira, at this time resident in Ireland, on the 19th of February moved, in the Irish house of peers, an address to the lord-lieutenant, beseeching his excellency "to pursue such conciliatory measures as might allay the

* Report of the Secret Committee (England).

apprehensions, and extinguish the discontents, unhappily prevalent in the country." This was the last almost hopeless effort of humanity and wisdom to compose the differences, and heal the distractions, of this unfortunate and undone country. His lordship recapitulated those abominable acts of cruelty and torture, flogging, picketing, half-hanging, &c. &c. by which the confession of crimes had, in innumerable instances, been extorted from persons against whom no legal evidence could be adduced, and no reasonable cause even of suspicion existed—persons who, unless under the momentary pressure of excruciating agony, still persisted in the avowal of their innocence. His lordship declared his intention, if his statement of facts was denied, to move for the examination of witnesses at the bar of the house*. He admitted the pro-

* "Innumerable are the examples" (says a justly celebrated writer) "of innocent persons, who, from the agony of torture, have confessed themselves guilty. Lives there a man who, when he reflects on such cruelty, is not tempted to fly from society, and return to his natural state of independence? The result of torture is a matter of calculation, and depends on the constitution, which differs in every individual. To discover truth by this method is a problem to be resolved only by a mathematician; who, when the force of the muscles, and the sensibility of the nerves, of an innocent person are precisely stated, may be required to find the degree of pain necessary to make him confess himself guilty of a given crime."

BECCARIA *on Crimes and Punishments.*

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bable existence of conspiracy in the kingdom: "but do not (said he), on a loose charge of partial transgression, inflict punishment on a whole community. The state of society is dreadful indeed, when the safety of every man is at the mercy of a secret informer; when the cupidity, the malevolence, or the erroneous suspicions of an individual are sufficient to destroy his neighbour." His lordship stigmatised, in the severest terms of reproach, the culpable misconduct of ministers in the recal of lord Fitzwilliam, and the final refusal of government to concede to the Catholics those immunities which would give them a common interest with their countrymen. With respect to the question of parliamentary reform, though he had himself no high idea of its practical benefit, he was of opinion that it had a just claim to be candidly investigated, and that the general voice of the country ought to be complied with.

What effect measures of conciliation, if adopted at this late period, would have produced, is not easy to conjecture. If they had not extinguished the conspiracy, they would have extremely disconcerted the conspirators, and weakened the bonds of the association. But there was as little hope on the one side as fear on the other, that any such measures would be adopted. The lord-chancellor Fitzgibbon,

recently created earl of Clare, ventured boldly to assert, "that the system of government had been a system of conciliation; that in no place had the experiment been so fairly tried as in Ireland, and in none had it so completely failed." His lordship adduced strong facts to demonstrate "that the object of the United Society of Irishmen was to overthrow the government and dissolve the British connexion. He did not justify the proceedings of the Orange-men, but he asserted that they were not enemies to their country. He did not approve the tortures, burnings, assassinations, and murderings, of which the noble lord had spoken; but he was compelled to observe, that when treason and rebellion make it necessary to call out the military, it is not always possible to restrain their resentments."

The lord-chancellor having, in the course of his speech, passed some reflections on the bishop of Down, who had promoted a petition to the king in favor of conciliatory measures, that prelate, with much firmness and dignity, vindicated his character from the illiberal aspersions thus publicly thrown upon it. He acknowledged "that he was a friend to conciliation. Coercion (he said) had been tried long enough. With respect to Catholic emancipation, he considered it as a matter of right, not of favor; and a re-

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form of parliament as an act of policy, which the state of the country rendered absolutely necessary; and the present calamities of the country he ascribed to that most impolitic and lamentable measure, the recal of lord Fitzwilliam." The motion of lord Moira was finally rejected by a very large majority.

It is a memorable circumstance, that, nine days only after this debate, sir Ralph Abercrombie, commander-in-chief, declared in public orders, "that the very disgraceful frequency of courts-martial, and the many complaints of irregularities in the conduct of the troops in that kingdom, had too unfortunately proved the army to be in a state of licentiousness which must render it formidable to every one but the enemy." This able and highly-respected officer was immediately superseded by general Lake.

Progress of the Irish conspiracy.

Early in the new year, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, one of the pretended Executive Directory, leaving Ireland, had arrived in London, with an intention of proceeding to France in company with one Binns a very active member of the Corresponding Society, James O'Coigley an Irish priest, and two other persons, attending them as servants, of the names of Allen and Leary. During the temporary residence of Mr. O'Connor in London, that gentleman, and O'Coigley the priest, a man of great courage,

activity, and address, kept up a confidential intercourse with the principal members of the popular societies in London; which, in consequence of the severe and impolitic measures of government, had gone on in the usual progression from discontent to disaffection; and the object of whose most daring leaders, for two years past, had unquestionably been the establishment of a British republic by the assistance of France; and meetings were privately held to concert the means of procuring arms to enable them to co-operate with the French forces in case of an invasion. A traitorous cabal of this sort was attended by O'Connor and O'Coigley, at an apartment in Furnival's Inn, which was the customary place of resort with those who were most deeply engaged in the conspiracy; and secret consultations were here carried on with a view to projects deemed too dangerous and desperate to be brought forward in any of the larger societies. Amongst these plans, it is pretended, was a most horrid one, for effecting a general insurrection at the same moment in the metropolis and throughout the country; and of directing it to the object of seizing or assassinating the king, the royal family, and many of the members of both houses of parliament. An officer of rank and experience in his majesty's service was selected as their military

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leader; and though these plans were not as yet sufficiently matured to warrant any present attempt, the most sanguine hopes were entertained that the time was nearly ripe for measures of open violence.

Attempts had been recently made, and with much success, to form in this country a society of United Englishmen, on the model of that of the United Irish, and O'Coigley and Binns were the leading persons in that design. In and about the town of Manchester only, the association had extended itself to no less than eighty divisions, containing from fifteen to thirty-six members each; and it was organized in like manner with that of Ireland, under the direction of county and provincial committees, &c. the whole being governed by a secret executive committee, whose orders were implicitly obeyed by all the members of the society. An association of the same nature was also established in Scotland; and both of them maintained an intimate intercourse with the original Corresponding Society*.

* These particulars are taken from the Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons, presented by Mr. Dundas, January 23, 1799, which, being itself founded on the *reports* of the government spies, must be received with many grains of allowance. The plot for assassinating the king and royal family, &c. seems an incredible extravagance, and has

Government having received accurate intelligence relative to the motions and designs of O'Connor and his companions, on the 28th of May they were taken into custody at Margate, in the attempt to obtain a passage to France. Upon the priest O'Coigley was found a paper, styled an Address from the Secret Committee of England to the Executive Directory of France, clearly demonstrating the traitorous views of those concerned in the framing of this address, or the transmission of it to the French government. Being brought to their trial at Maidstone, in a few weeks, O'Coigley was capitally convicted, on the evidence of the paper in question, of high-treason, and after a short interval executed—suffering with heroic fortitude, as a victim in the cause of his country, the utmost penalties of the law. No evidence appearing against Allen and Leary, they were immediately set at liberty; but O'Connor and Binns, notwithstanding their acquittal, were detained on another charge of high-treason, no doubt on very good grounds, preferred against them. The rank in life and connexions of O'Connor being

Trial of Arthur O'Connor, &c.

been confirmed by no collateral evidence. Of the disaffection of the leaders of the popular societies *at this period*, however, there can remain no reasonable doubt. The "experienced officer" alluded to, is supposed with great probability to have been the unfortunate colonel Despard.

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very distinguished, as the nephew and reputed heir of lord Longueville,—his manners also being prepossessing, and his general integrity of character unimpeached,—he had easy introduction to some of the first families in England, chiefly those connected with the opposition; and, from a principle of honor, cautiously and carefully concealing from them his real designs, he was universally believed to have extended his views no farther than the entire emancipation of the Catholics, and a radical reform of parliament upon the principles of the constitution. Several persons, therefore, of the first distinction and merit appeared at Maidstone to give evidence to his character as, to the best of their knowledge and belief, a true and loyal subject,—a circumstance which excited much temporary abuse and obloquy in the ministerial prints.

The crisis was now arrived which was to prove fatal either to the government or to the conspirators: In a complicated plan of conspiracy, the agency of many persons must be employed; and, as the plot ripens to maturity, the secret of it must be gradually disclosed. Among the persons admitted to a considerable share of confidence, was one Reynolds, formerly a silk manufacturer in Dublin, but now resident in the county of Kildare. Having been sworn a United Irishman in February 1797, Reynolds

was in the following winter appointed treasurer to the county, and also a colonel in the army of the insurgents. On the 25th of February, 1798, this loyal traitor disclosed to a partisan of government, of the name of Cope, the nature and whole extent of the conspiracy, being particularly careful not to omit that a meeting of delegates for the province of Leinster was summoned for the 12th of March, at the house of Mr. Oliver Bond, one of the five executive directors. At the day and hour appointed for the meeting, the house of Mr. Bond was beset by the officers of justice. Fourteen of the delegates, with their secretary, and Bond himself, were apprehended; and, at the same time, Dr. M'Nevin and counsellor Emmett, both of the directory, and several other leading members of the society, were taken into custody.

Arrest of the Irish Directory.

A warrant was also issued against lord Edward Fitzgerald; but he escaped, and remained for several weeks concealed in the city of Dublin, but was at length discovered in the house of one Murphy, a dealer in feathers. On the police officers entering the room, the unhappy nobleman made a desperate, but hopeless and, against men employed in the discharge of their public duty, very improper defence. He wounded two of the principals, Mr. Justice Swan and a captain Ryan, dangerously—the latter, as it proved, mortally; and was himself so severely

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hurt in the affray, that, the agitation of his mind also no doubt contributing to the catastrophe, he languished a few days only before he expired. His intentions appear to have been upright, his views disinterested, his courage heroic; but he had deeply imbibed those fatally romantic notions in politics which are so ill calculated to attain the practical purposes at which they profess to aim.

Government received also full information of the projects of the conspirators from another quarter. A captain Armstrong, a man of great art and address, had been instructed to profess himself a convert to the cause, to enter into the society, and to obtain, by a shew of zeal and all the attentions of assiduity, the confidence of the leaders,—in all which he succeeded to a very great degree, without exciting the remotest suspicion.

The whole body of conspirators being thrown into the utmost confusion and consternation by the late arrests, and the political existence of the executive directory being now at an end, the government, on the 30th of March, published a proclamation, stating, "that the traitorous conspiracy, long existing within this kingdom, had broken out into acts of open rebellion; and giving notice that the most direct and positive orders had been issued to the officers commanding his majesty's forces to em-

ploy them with the utmost vigor and decision for the immediate suppression thereof." And, on the 18th of April, the internal disorders and distractions of the kingdom daily and almost hourly increasing, major-general Duff gave public notice, "that the lord-lieutenant and council had issued orders to him, to quarter troops, to press horses and carriages, to demand forage and provisions, and to hold courts-martial for the trial of offences of all descriptions, civil and military." The general concludes with saying, "the people are forewarned, that, in case of invasion from the French, if they should attempt to join the enemy, or communicate with him, or join in any insurrection, they will be immediately put to death, and their houses and properties destroyed. The general-officers call on the people to know why they should be less attached to the government now than they were a year ago, when they shewed so much loyalty in assisting his majesty's troops to oppose the landing of the French?"

A new executive directory had been appointed by the provincial delegates, amongst whom were two brothers of the name of Sheares, by profession barristers, young men of excellent talents, and, politics apart, of unsullied reputation. To these new directors the profligate Armstrong, early in the month of May, obtained an introduction; and from them he

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learned "that a general rising must immediately take place,—that the impatience of the people, since the criminal prosecutions, could no longer be restrained,—that it was become necessary to make a great national effort, and relinquish the original plan of waiting for French succours." The project proposed was to seize the camp of Loughlins-town, the artillery at Chapelizod, and the castle of Dublin, in one night—the 23d of May. It was also planned, that a great insurrection should take place at Cork at the same time. But, on the 21st of that month, the two brothers, Henry and John Sheares, with some others of the principal conspirators, were apprehended, the city and county of Dublin were proclaimed by the lord-lieutenant and council to be in a state of insurrection; the guards at the castle, and all the great objects of attack, were trebled; and the whole city was, in fact, converted into a garrison.

Rebellion in Ireland.

By these precautions the metropolis was happily preserved from becoming a scene of blood and slaughter; but on the day prefixed great bodies of the insurgents appeared in arms in different parts of the country*. In a dispatch from lord Camden to the duke of Portland, May

* Opus aggredior, opimum casibus, ferox prœliis, victoriis atrox, ipsâ etiam pace sævum. TAC. *Hist.* lib. i.

24, his excellency states, "that at half past two that morning a regular attack had been made by a rebel force, consisting of about a thousand men, armed with musquets and pikes, upon the town of Naas, fourteen miles only from Dublin, but which was repulsed by the Armagh militia, 4th dragoon guards, and Ancient British fencibles, commanded by lord Gosford." Three of the prisoners taken were immediately hanged in the public streets, by way of example.—About the same time general Dundas came up with and defeated a large party of the rebels posted on the north side of the Liffy, near the hills of Kilcullen. On the 25th, a body of about 400 rebels, which had ventured to enter Rathfarnham, a village in the vicinity of Dublin, was encountered by a small party of dragoons, and dispersed with loss: their two leaders being taken were immediately tried by a court-martial and executed.

On the 26th of May another and much larger division of the rebel force was defeated at Tallagh-hill, about thirteen miles from the metropolis; and nearly at the same time they were repulsed in two different attacks on the towns of Carlow and Kildare—in all these actions losing not less than eleven or twelve hundred men in a very few days after the commencement of hostilities. But their chief effort was

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made in the county of Wexford, where they assembled in great force between the towns of Wexford and Enniscorthy, situated on the river Slaney; the latter of which places they carried sword in hand on the 28th of the same month. It was impossible for Wexford long to hold out, and, on the 30th, the white flag was displayed, and the garrison surrendered at discretion. A scene of horrid disorder and outrage ensued on the entrance of the rebels into the town. The houses of the Protestants were ransacked, and great numbers of the inhabitants committed to prison. Three gentlemen of large property, members of the society of United Irishmen, who had been for some time past in custody, on a charge of high-treason, were at the same time liberated, and one of them, Beauchamp Bagnal Harvey, nominated to the chief command of the rebel army, though in no respect qualified for so arduous an office.

Rebels defeated at New-Ross.

Flushed with this success, the rebels marched, under the conduct of their new general, June the 5th, to the attack of New Ross, where general Johnson, an excellent officer, commanded. With a view to disorder the king's troops, who did not amount to 3,000 men, posted without the town, the rebels drove before them with their pikes a vast number of horses and oxen. They had also some field-pieces and howitzers;

The weight of the rebel column, after a brave resistance, forced the troops into the town, fortified only by an old ruinous wall. Here the battle recommenced, and, after a dreadful carnage, the rebels were at length compelled to retreat with great loss; though the military were prevented by extreme fatigue, the action having lasted eight hours, from attempting a pursuit. The gallant lord Mountjoy was killed early in this engagement, fighting at the head of his own regiment. In revenge for this disappointment, and by way of retaliation for the numerous executions by martial law which had been inflicted upon their deluded adherents in different places, the rebel chiefs condemned a great number of the loyalists of Wexford and Enniscorthy to death—and this sentence was carried into effect a few days after, with circumstances of excessive barbarity. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

On the 9th of June the rebels made an attempt upon Arklow, with as little success as the former upon Ross. Their circumstances now became critical—general Lake advancing towards the seat of the southern rebellion with large reinforcements. The main body of the rebels, to the amount of 18 or 20,000 men, had taken an uncommonly strong position within a mile of Enniscorthy, upon an eminence called Vinegar-hill, from which, had they possessed any Defeat of the rebels at Enniscorthy.

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share of military skill, it would have been difficult, if not impracticable, to dislodge them. A cordon of troops was gradually collected from different quarters, which almost surrounded the rebel station. The 21st of June was destined for the grand attack. A column, under general Johnson, began the fight by an assault upon the town of Enniscorthy, situated upon the right bank of the Slaney, immediately under the hill, at the base of which that beautiful stream flows in a winding channel. Three other columns, under the generals Dundas, Duff, and Needham, ascended the mountain in different directions. The rebels maintained their ground obstinately for an hour and a half; but, on perceiving the danger of being surrounded, they fled with great precipitation, part of them flying to the mountains of Wicklow, and part to the chain of hills separating the counties of Carlow and Wexford. Being pursued with vigor, and no quarter given, they sustained immense loss; while of the king's troops the whole number of killed, wounded, and prisoners, was something less than a hundred,—a surprising proof of the superiority of skill and discipline over mere unenlightened courage.

Wexford was evacuated the next day. General Lake, in his public dispatch of that date, affirms, that general Moore had entered the

place so opportunely as to prevent it from being laid in ashes; and, which was still more interesting, to render impracticable the premeditated massacre of the remaining prisoners—eighty-six persons having been murdered by them the preceding day, military music attending and playing a dead march, and their bodies, pierced with pikes, thrown over the bridge. Other horrible cruelties were also committed by the rebels on the Protestants of that vicinity; and, upon their flight from New Ross, it is affirmed that, exasperated by the intelligence of the refusal of the royalists to grant quarter, orders were issued by one of the rebel commanders, Murphy, a priest, to set fire to a large barn at Scollobogue, near the foot of Carrickburn mountain, some miles distant, where upwards of two hundred of their prisoners, including women and children, were confined under a guard when the rebel army marched to Enniscorthy, and all perished, amidst surrounding shouts of savage exultation.

Suppression of the rebellion in the South.

Harvey, the rebel general, who had expressed some disapprobation of these enormities, was divested of his command after the battle of Ross; and their leaders were chosen from the most barbarous and bigoted of their own sect. Having been suffered to abscond, this unhappy man, who saw and acknowledged his error when too late, sought to conceal himself in a cave

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upon one of the rocky islands which lie near the entrance of Wexford-harbour. But being discovered, he was immediately tried by a court-martial, and convicted; and, with divers other persons, executed June the 26th, on the bridge of Wexford. On the same day, a large body of the rebels, with the bloody bigot, father Murphy, at their head, who had escaped from Vinegar-hill, were defeated by general sir Charles Asgill, at Kilconnel, considerably more than a thousand men being killed on the spot, with trifling loss on the part of the king's troops. Murphy was soon after taken in his flight, and most deservedly hanged.

Whatever might be the fond and delusive hopes entertained by the comparatively very small number of rebel chieftains, who, uninfected by the contagion of religious phrensy, had embraced the new doctrines of liberty, equality, and universal fraternization, it immediately appeared, upon the breaking out of this sanguinary rebellion, how utterly unable they were to inspire the bulk of their ignorant, ferocious, and brutal followers with sentiments even of common humanity, and much less to restrain them within the limits of law, equity, or justice. The generality of the priests who appeared openly in this rebellion took the utmost pains to diffuse, as widely as possible, the malignant

spirit of religious bigotry and inveterate animosity against the Protestants, very few of whom were found in the ranks of the rebel army. Those who had been imprudent enough to enter were either obliged carefully to conceal their religion, or submit to be re-baptized by the priests, who were continually preaching up, that, in destroying heretics, they were performing a duty to heaven. Murphy, one of the most popular and profligate of this class, in a sermon delivered by him after the defeat of Ross, declared, "that those who were killed in that battle had fallen in consequence of their want of faith—that this general rising of the Catholics was visibly the work of the Almighty, who had determined that the heretics, after having reigned so many years, should be now extirpated, and the true Catholic religion established." At the successful attack at Three-Rocks, previous to the surrender of Wexford, the same Murphy marched at their head, telling them "not to fear; for if they took up the dust from the roads, and threw it at the king's troops, they would fall dead before them." Many of the priests pretended to give charms to prevent the balls of the soldiery from doing hurt; and father Roche, one of the number (as was believed by these poor credulous wretches) did

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constantly catch the bullets that came from his majesty's army in his hand*. Such were the base materials with which the rash and presumptuous leaders of this rebellion hoped to construct, in the room of the existing government, a pure and perfect fabric of uncontaminated democracy! Certainly, a more crude, wild, and visionary project, never entered into the head or heart of man. It must not, however, be supposed, that the higher descriptions of Catholics, whether ecclesiastical or civil, were in any degree implicated in this atrocious revolt, and much less that they approved of the mode of conducting it. On the contrary, the whole body of the Catholic prelacy, comprehending the twenty-two titular bishops and archbishops, with the lords Fingal, Southwell, Gormanstown, and Kenmare, sir Edward Bellew, sir Thomas Burke, &c. &c. signed and published a paper, containing a very strong dissuasive from joining in the rebellion, and exhortation to all who were concerned in it to return to their allegiance, declaring, "that, by refusing to relinquish the treasonable plans in which they are engaged, they will not only subject themselves to the loss of life and property, but throw

* Vide "Report of the Irish House of Commons."—Also "Appendix to Jackson's Narrative."

on the religion of which they profess to be advocates, the most indelible stain*."

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After the great defeat at Enniscorthy, the rebels were never able to rally, or to appear again in any considerable force in the southern parts of the kingdom. In the north, where general Nugent commanded, the insurrection became general throughout the counties of Down and Antrim. The town of Antrim was for a short time in the possession of the rebels, but they were, on the 7th of June, driven out of that place after a sharp engagement and cannonade. In this action lord O'Neil received a dangerous wound, of which he afterwards died.

Rebellion suppressed in the North.

* In the excellent reply published by Dr. Caulfield, Catholic bishop of Wexford, to the vile collection of calumnies stiled "Memoirs of the different Rebellions in Ireland, by Sir Richard Musgrave, Baronet," the Doctor declares, "that not one of the popish priests who had a flock, *not* ONE *parish priest* of the county of Wexford, was implicated, or had any concern in fomenting, encouraging, or aiding, the rebellion;—on the contrary they abhorred, detested, and shuddered at it:" though he allows, that "the few renegade, abandoned, reprobate priests who perverted their ministry and joined or headed the rebellion might have had influence over the rebels."—And the Wexford clergy themselves, in a solemn declaration signed by them, July 20, 1801, say, "It is a vile and cruel calumny to assert that we had any authority over the rebels except what prayers, supplications, and entreaties, could obtain."—Elsewhere in the same declaration, they assert, "that the efforts they used were often at the risque of their own lives." And again, "We most

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On the 12th of the same month their main force, amounting at most to 6 or 7,000 men, was attacked and totally defeated at Ballynahinch. A party of the rebels also were repulsed at Carrick-fergus; and, in a short time, the generality of the insurgents laid down their arms, and the tranquillity of the province of Ulster was restored*.

solemnly declare, that we hold and always held in abhorrence the conduct of the few misguided clergymen who joined the rebels." By the earnest persuasions of the Catholic clergy, and particularly of Dr. Caulfield, the rebels were prevailed upon to evacuate Wexford without putting their horrid menaces into execution of slaughtering the inhabitants, and laying the town in ashes. The friends of government conjured the clergy to exert themselves on this occasion; yet it was subsequently imputed to them as a crime that their solicitations proved successful. "I traversed many thousand rebels on that day," says Dr. C. "exhorting, beseeching, and sometimes on my knees conjuring them to depart. Those who came in latest were the most obstinate, sanguinary, and infuriate, on whom we could hardly make any impression;—so that I despaired of effecting my purpose, and would have given it up, were it not that the people of the town, and many rebels of more humanity and reason, still pressed me to continue."

* "The horrible cruelties (says a certain writer, zealous in the cause of government) exercised by the great body of the rebels in Leinster, on the Protestants, soon alarmed the few Dissenters, confederates of the Romish insurgents in the north. They immediately saw into the real design of their new allies; and withdrawing themselves from a conspiracy, which they

Though no dissatisfaction was expressed at the conduct of lord Camden, it was deemed proper by the English cabinet, that, in the existing circumstances, Ireland should be placed under the government of a military lord-lieutenant, who might, nevertheless, be of a temper less obdurate than the present viceroy; and an happy choice was made in the person of the marquis Cornwallis, who arrived in Dublin on the 20th of June; and under his auspices the general system of government immediately changed to that of moderation and lenity. Some severe examples were, however, deemed

Earl Cornwallis appointed chief governor.

clearly perceived would in its success be attended with their own destruction, all projects of rebellion vanished in the province of Ulster. Rebellion there was but partially entertained; it never had very numerous partisans; the flame, thus feeble, was easily quenched, never to be re-kindled.—The great strength of the rebellion lay in the province of Leinster. The whole mass of the Romish inhabitants of the counties of Wicklow, Wexford, Kildare, and Carlow, rose at once. Many inhabitants of the adjacent counties, particularly of Meath and Dublin, of the same religious persuasion, joined them. Their number in arms at one time amounted to upwards of 50,000 men. Confiding in this strength, they did not think it necessary to conceal their designs of extirpating the Protestants; the excision of all heretics they, on the contrary, proclaimed to be their object and intention, and evinced by their actions the sincerity of this declaration."

DUIGENAN'S *'Representation of the Political State of Ireland.'*

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absolutely necessary; and a special commission was, in a short time, opened in Dublin for the trial of the principal delinquents. At the bar of this court the brothers, John and Henry Sheares; M'Can, secretary to the provincial meeting; and O'Byrne, a noted member of the United Association; were all tried, and soon after executed. Mr. Oliver Bond was likewise tried on the 23d of July, convicted and condemned; and in his fate the other conspirators now began to read and foresee their own.

The rebellion was by this time apparently quelled: the people were every-where returning to their allegiance, and delivering up their arms. Their hopes from France had been miserably disappointed, and nothing appeared before their eyes but individual destruction, without having effected any one purpose for which they had associated. In these circumstances it was intimated, on the part of government, that if Mr. Bond would consent to give to administration all the information of which he was possessed, relative to the late conspiracy and rebellion, his sentence might be commuted for that of banishment. This proposition was nobly rejected by Bond, if his information or evidence should endanger the life of any man with whom he was connected. The mercy of government was then extended to all the state prisoners, in

cluding O'Connor, Emmett, and M'Nevin; who acceded to the terms offered, on condition they should be at liberty voluntarily to transport themselves to any country not at war with his majesty, and that no further prosecution should be carried on, except against actual murderers, or such rebels as should be hereafter taken in arms. A general amnesty, with a few exceptions, was soon after granted by the chief governor, and confirmed in parliament. The system of moderation and mercy adopted by this respectable nobleman was peculiarly seasonable, and attended with the happiest effects. Most of the rebel corps, who had retreated to the mountainous parts of Wexford and Wicklow, took the benefit of the amnesty, and laid down their arms: those who still resisted were rather banditti, who confined themselves to nocturnal depredations, than troops in arms against the government. 1798.

Thus was the kingdom of Ireland once more reduced to peaceable subjection to the crown of Great Britain, and a dangerous rebellion crushed, which, had the government of the country been previously actuated by the beneficent spirit of the nobleman who now filled the highest office in it, would never have existed:—"To hinder insurrection (says a great and admirable writer) by driving away the people, and

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to govern peaceably by having no subjects, is an expedient that argues no great profundity in politics: to soften the obdurate, to convince the mistaken, to mollify the resentful, are worthy of a statesman; but it affords a legislator little self-applause to consider that where there was formerly an insurrection there is now a wilderness*."

Contrary to the general spirit of the now prevailing system, and contrary also, it is probable, to the private sentiments of the good and worthy chief-governor, a bill was introduced into parliament, which, at a very late period of the summer, was still sitting, for the confiscation and forfeiture of the estates of lord Edward Fitzgerald, Bagnal Harvey, and Cornelius Grojan, a man of large property, who had suffered in this rebellion,—and finally passed into an act. The case of the former, who had neither been tried nor convicted, was deemed peculiarly hard. The celebrated advocate Curran pleaded with great eloquence at the bar of the house against the bill of attainder. "Often have I, of late years, (said this great ornament of his profession) gone to the dungeon of the captive, but never yet to the grave of the deceased, to receive instructions for his defence:—Never have

* JOHNSON'S '*Tour to the Hebrides.*'

I, till now, been called upon to plead at the trial of the dead! What might perhaps have admitted of easy explanation, during the lifetime of the accused, must now be for ever buried with him in silence. The present bill convicts where proof is impossible, and punishes where guilt cannot exist: it confiscates the property of the widow, and robs the orphan's cradle. A state must be reduced to the lowest degradation when it is driven to seek protection in the abandonment of the law,—in that melancholy avowal of its weakness and its fears."

It is remarkable, that, for the space of near three weeks of the month of June, during which the rebels were in possession of Wexford, and their armies were in that part of the country masters of the field, no supply of men, arms, ammunition, or stores of any kind, arrived from France, although the Directory had positively engaged that an armament should sail to their assistance at the latter end of April, or, at the farthest, early in the month of May; but when the insurrection was completely quelled, and no prospect of success remained, a small French squadron, part of a much larger force destined for the same service, appeared on the coast of Connaught, and, on the 22d of August, cast anchor in the bay of Killala, where the troops on board disembarked; and the number not

French force lands in the bay of Killala.

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being ascertained, a very great temporary alarm was excited. According to the very candid and interesting Narrative published by the bishop of Killala (Dr. Stock), the French troops, who were under the command of general Humbert, second in rank to general Hoche in the expedition of December 1796 to Bantry-Bay, conducted themselves with the most exemplary moderation. They were soon joined by several thousands of the Irish peasantry, all Catholics; and the French officers expressed the utmost chagrin and surprize that the Protestants continued, to a man, firm in their attachment to the government. The episcopal palace was made the head-quarters; and a green flag was mounted over the gate, with the famous inscription:—"ERIN GO BRAGH!" —"Ireland for ever!"

Rebellion in the West:

In a few days the invaders, to the number of 1100, leaving a small garrison at Killala, began their march, with the disloyal natives whom they had clothed and armed, to Castlebar, the chief town of the county of Mayo. It was with the utmost difficulty that the barbarous Irish could be restrained from acts of the most licentious disorder. On the 27th general Humbert reached Castlebar, where general Lake was posted, with a force far superior, to intercept him; but, before the weakness of the enemy could be ascertained, the British troops found themselves at-

tacked by surprize; and, after a resistance not very vigorous, were compelled to retreat, with the loss of 800 men and ten pieces of cannon. Castlebar immediately surrendered; and the French were strengthened by many deserters, chiefly from the different regiments of militia. 1798.

Suppressed by lord Cornwallis.

Lord Cornwallis now determined to take the field in person, and, the general disaffection of the country being known, to proceed with the utmost caution and vigilance, leaving nothing to chance or fortune. After the action at Castlebar the French had moved, with their whole force, towards Tuam; but the lord-lieutenant, having by this time collected a great army, with which he proposed to enclose them on all sides, general Humbert was obliged to retreat in his return; and, entertaining from the first no hope of ultimate success, he made a circuitous march, in order to afford the natives an opportunity of escape, which the far greater number embraced. On the morning of the 8th of September, the van-guard of the British army came up with the rear of the French at Ballinamuck; and, after a short but gallant resistance, the French, being summoned to lay down their arms, surrendered at discretion; but the rebels who remained with them, fleeing in all directions, suffered very severely. When the return of the French prisoners was made, the public were

Surrender of the French.

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astonished to find that this formidable host amounted to no more, officers included, than the insignificant number of 844. The garrison left at Killala could make no effectual resistance to the force sent against them; but the natives, in conjunction with the French troops, defended the place with great bravery; and it was at last taken sword in hand. The behaviour of colonel Charost, who commanded at Killala, was marked throughout by valor, tempered with honor and humanity. After the re-capture of the bishop's palace, such was the discipline preserved, that not a single article of private property was found missing. Even the side-board of plate remained untouched; and when the commandant was applied to, by a popish priest of some pretensions to literature, for a present of books out of the bishop's library, he replied with disdain—"The bishop's library is just as much his own now as ever it was."

Naval victory gained by sir J. B. Warren on the coast of Ulster.

A second attempt, equally absurd and unaccountable, was made by the French in the following month; when a squadron from Brest, consisting of one ship of the line, the Hoche of eighty guns, and eight frigates, were descried off the coast of Ulster by admiral sir John Borlase Warren, who commanded a squadron of far superior force on that station. At seven o'clock on the morning of the 12th of October the ac-

tion commenced, and at eleven the Hoche, after a gallant defence, struck her flag. Six of the frigates were also captured; and thus ended the projects of the French Directory for the conquest of Ireland. BOOK XXIV. 1796.

Amongst the prisoners taken in the Hoche was the famous Theobald Wolfe Tone, the reputed founder of the society of United Irishmen, and the most active and able of the agents employed by them abroad. He was brought to Dublin, and tried there by a court-martial. Far from attempting to deny or extenuate his offence, he avowed with the most heroic firmness the part he had acted, and gloried in the treason for which he was arraigned. "Into the service of the French republic (said this virtuous and high-minded, however mistaken, patriot) I originally entered with the view of serving my country. From that motive I have encountered the toils and terrors of the field of battle; I have braved the dangers of the sea, covered with the triumphant fleets of the power I opposed; I have sacrificed my prospects in life; I have courted poverty; I have left my wife unprotected, and my children fatherless. After doing this, for what I thought a good cause, it is but little that I die for it. In such a cause as this success is every thing. I have attempted that in which Washington succeeded and Kosciusko

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failed. What awaits me I am aware of, but I scorn to supplicate or to complain. Whatever I have written, spoken, or acted, in relation to this country, and its connection with Great Britain, which I conceived to be the bane of its prosperity, I here avow, and am now ready to meet the consequence. Having sustained an high rank in the French service, I only wish, if the court possesses such a discretionary power, that they will award me the death of a soldier." —After a long pause, no doubt of involuntary admiration and regret, he was informed that his request would be submitted to his excellency. Finding, however, the little probability of succeeding in his application, he terminated his life in prison by an act of violence. As this extraordinary man was the original author, his trial might be considered also as the last concluding scene of this short but bloody rebellion, in which, upon a moderate computation, more than twenty thousand lives were lost, and a great part of the kingdom exhibited a horrid spectacle of misery and desolation. Such are the direful consequences of civil discord! and such were the deplorable effects resulting from the total want in the administrative government of the British empire at this memorable crisis of that sublime part of wisdom necessary for the conduct of great affairs!

From this important review of domestic concerns, it is requisite to transfer our attention to the military and political transactions of the continent. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

On the departure of general Bonaparte from Italy, in November, 1797, every thing wore the face of external tranquillity; but the interior agitation of Lombardy, of Rome, of Naples, was still very great. Although the peace of Tolentino had prolonged the political existence of the Holy See, it had been left in a state of extreme embarrassment. The counter-revolutionary hopes of the Roman pontiff were completely annihilated; three of his provinces irremediably lost; his coffers exhausted; his subjects, laboring under new and heavy oppressions, universally discontented, and, with few exceptions, divided into the two opposite and hostile classes of political enthusiasts and religious fanatics. The king of Spain had conceived great indignation against the pope for rejecting the counsels and mediation of his ambassador, the chevalier d'Azara, and ordered him to retire to Florence. But, compassionating the misfortunes of the holy father, he, after a short interval, not only permitted the ambassador to return to Rome, but also sent from Spain a deputation of friendship and condolence, consisting of the cardinal arch- Miscellaneous transactions on the continent.

BOOK XXIV. bishop of Toledo, and the archbishops of Seville and Seleucia.

1798. Amongst the many subjects of complaint against the government of the pope was his extravagant fondness for his nephews, the cardinal and duke of Braschi; the latter of whom had long been loaded with the spoils and execrations of the people, whose curses were now become loud as well as deep. Insurrectionary placards were stuck up at his palace; French airs were sung in public; and the political demise of the Holy See was mentioned without scruple as an event which might soon be expected to take place, and as already in the act of receiving *extreme unction*. On the other hand, for all which was wanting in esteem or affection, the court of Rome endeavoured to compensate in fear. The garrison of St. Angelo was augmented—troops were quartered in the city—the system of *espionage* became universal, and many of the inhabitants were arrested and imprisoned on different grounds of suspicion. The pope himself could not appear in public without receiving marks of the general contempt, not to say hatred, entertained for his person and government. In this distracted situation of affairs, Joseph Bonaparte, brother of the general, entered Rome as ambassador from the French re-

public. The conduct of this minister is allowed by all to have been mild and judicious. In consequence of his influence over the papal counsels, the persons imprisoned for their political opinions were released; the Austrian general Provera was dismissed; and the holy father recognized the new Cisalpine republic. Also an act of grace passed for the pardon of all offences. But the ambassador discouraged in the most decisive manner all the overtures made to him for the subversion of the papal government.—Nevertheless, on the 28th of December, a popular insurrection took place; and the insurgents entering forcibly into the courts of the ambassador's palace, made them re-echo with the cry of the Roman republic and the Roman people—demanding the aid of the French in order to assure their liberty. The ambassador appearing with the insignia of his office, attended by the generals Duphot and Sherlock, remonstrated with the insurgents on the folly and rashness of their conduct, and commanded them forthwith to disperse. In the mean time an armed force, sent by the governor of the city, arrived at the palace, and a party of cavalry discharged their carbines upon the insurgents. M. Bonaparte immediately advancing, demanded by what authority they had violated his jurisdiction? when a second discharge killed seve-

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Insurrection at Rome.

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ral persons in the rear of the ambassador and his train. The French minister now conjured the soldiery to withdraw, engaging that the delinquents should be delivered up and punished. Regardless of this representation, they were preparing for another discharge, which general Duphot rushing forward to prevent, a scene of the greatest confusion ensued, and the general was mortally wounded by a fusileer, who fired the contents of his musquet into his body. The ambassador immediately retreated, not without hazard and difficulty, through a private passage, into the gardens of his palace, the courts of which were strewed with the killed and wounded bodies of the insurgents.

Death of General Duphot.

In consequence of this atrocious outrage, the French minister withdrew with indignation from Rome, and retired to Florence. The holy father, who was said to be ignorant of the whole transaction, after imploring in vain the mediation of the chevalier d'Azara, ordered his secretary of state, cardinal Doria, to write to the marquis Masimi, the Roman minister at Paris, in the following terms: "You must not offer any satisfaction for this event, which has rendered the holy father and all of us inconsolable; but you must entreat the Directory to point out what satisfaction they require. To ask it and to obtain it shall be the same thing."

On the 17th of January, 1798, before any answer could be returned, the pope appointed a solemn procession of the three most celebrated relics in Rome; and in the proclamation published on this occasion, the pontiff thus expressed and exposed his weakness:—"Your faith shall be animated by the sight of sacred and holy objects, which the clergy shall conduct with devout pomp through the streets to St. Peter's, exposing to public veneration for several days on the high altar the venerable, most antient, and wonderful portrait of the most holy Saviour—also the miraculous picture of the Santa Maria in Portico—and the sacred chains wherewith the prince of the apostles was fettered. To any one, who in the aforesaid days shall visit St. Peter's, reciting before the above-mentioned sacred monuments the prayer beginning *Ante oculos tuos, Domine, &c.* or, in lieu of it, will repeat ten times the Pater-noster and the Ave Maria, praying as above, his holiness grants for each time, in each day, an indulgence for ten years and forty days." The portrait of the most holy Saviour here mentioned, and supposed to have been painted by supernatural agency, was known by the appellation of *Il Santo Volto.* It had not been publicly exhibited since the year 1709, after a terrible earthquake. 1798.

Previous to the procession, the streets were

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strewed with flowers and myrtles; all the religious orders, in their respective habits, and the cardinals, followed, with an immense concourse of people, many of the first distinction, barefoot. These inestimable relics remained for three weeks on the high altar of St. Peter's, and were then exhibited in the churches of Santa Maria Maggiore and St. Giovanni in Laterano. During this interval Rome appeared particularly gay, all persons being dressed in their richest habiliments; so that the city had rather the appearance of a carnival than of a mourning penance to avert its fall *.

Meanwhile the French and Cisalpine armies were advancing with rapid steps under the command of general Berthier. The march was nothing more than a military procession; for where no resistance was offered, no force was necessary

* *Vide* 'Narrative of Duppa.' It is impossible to read the papal proclamation upon this occasion without emotions of indignant contempt. '"The nations of Europe," says Mr. Burke, "have the very same Christian religion, agreeing in the fundamental parts, varying a little in the ceremonies and in the subordinate doctrines†." It might certainly with as much plausibility be affirmed, that the professors of rational and genuine Christianity agree with the Mufti of Constantinople, or the Grand Lama of Tartary in their religion, as with the pope of Rome, whose claims are indeed the most impious and impudent of the three.

† Thoughts on a Regicide Peace.

to be exerted. On his entrance into Rome, February 10th, the general declared, by a proclamation, that he came to punish the murderers of Duphot, and that the people of Rome should find in the French army protectors and friends. The castle of St. Angelo was immediately summoned; and the pope and cardinals who had there taken refuge surrendered at discretion; three only having previously provided for their escape—the cardinal nephew Braschi, York, and Albani.

Subversion of the papal government.

On the 15th of the same month, the people of Rome, or that part of them at least which had imbibed the revolutionary spirit, made a general insurrectionary movement, unattended, however, with acts of violence, and proceeded to plant the tree of liberty in the Capitol. Till this moment, general Berthier had chosen to remain with his army encamped without the walls of the city. As a last effort, the pontiff sent a deputation at this crisis to the general, offering provinces upon provinces, and millions upon millions, with the utmost profusion, as the price of his political restoration: but the general refused with disdain to receive any deputation or message but from the Roman people. Intelligence of the late glorious event being received nearly at the same time, the general accepted the invitation given him to accompany the peo-

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ple in solemn procession to the Capitol, to sanction, by his presence, the revolution which had taken place. Preceded by military music and detachments of horse and foot, general Berthier accordingly traversed Rome amidst an immense crowd of people, gazing with anxious curiosity, and still uncertain of their fate.

Re-establishment of the Roman republic.

The restoration of the Roman republic being formally proclaimed, the general made the following speech:—"Manes of Cato, of Pompey, and of Brutus! of Cicero, and of Hortensius! accept the homage of the French become free in the Capitol where you have so often defended the rights of the people, and added new glories to the Roman republic! The descendants of the Gauls, with the olive in their hand, now repair to this august spot to re-establish the altars of liberty erected by the Elder Brutus.—And you, People of Rome! who have regained your lawful rights, call to remembrance the monuments of glory that surround you!—resume your antient greatness, and emulate the virtues of your ancestors!"

Instead of loud acclamations, as might have been expected, this speech, and the proclamation which preceded it, were heard in profound silence.

During this ceremony the pope was celebrating mass in the Sistine chapel, it being the an-

niversary of his accession, in the midst of which Haller, the French commissary-general, entered the chapel, and announced to the sovereign pontiff that his reign was at an end. A provisional government was substituted under the popular appellation of a consulate, consisting of six members—of which Rigault, a lawyer of eminence, was named president. The presence of the holy father was judged by the newly-erected government to be incompatible with the tranquillity of the state. Early therefore on the morning of the 20th of February he left Rome, and soon after arrived at Sienna, where he was received into the monastery of St. Barbe —the monks sorrowfully welcoming him at their gates, and offering all that their convent could bestow to console him for his fallen honors. On the 26th he reached Florence, retiring to a Carthusian convent within two miles of that city; where he seemed, in a beautiful and sequestered residence, to forget his misfortunes; and experienced in his solitude an unwonted and dignified tranquillity, which commanded respect, and even approached to happiness. Nor could it be deemed wonderful, however exceptionable some parts of his conduct, that he was unable to weather the storm, in which the bark of St. Peter would have sunk with a pilot much abler than himself.

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The temporal power entrusted by the French

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general to the provisionary government was at length confirmed by a regular constitution, made at Paris, on the model of the French; but in which the names of consuls, senate, tribunes, quæstors, and other classic titles, superseded the vulgar appellations of commissioners and councils. But the real power was, under this specious veil of liberty, vested in the French commander, to whom an express clause of the new constitution allowed a *veto* in the formation of laws for ten years.

By the thoughtless prodigality of the papal government, and the recent exactions of the French, every legitimate source of wealth was exhausted: recourse was therefore had, without hesitation, by the *protectors* of the new republic, to every species of pillage and plunder. The Vatican and Quirinal palaces were stripped of their rich and costly furniture—and the former even of a great part of its literary treasures: also those at Monte Cavallo, Terracina, and Castel Gandolfo. The sacerdotal vestments of the Sistine, Pauline, and other pontifical chapels, were burnt for the gold and silver of the embroidery. And this system of devastation extended to the generality of the churches, and some noble mansions of obnoxious individuals. The Villa Albani in particular, unrivalled for exquisite works of art, and the beauty of its si-

tuation and architecture, was laid in ruins—a melancholy monument of the Vandalism of the eighteenth century. Yet was the conduct of the French troops, both officers and men, to the inhabitants in general, orderly and exemplary; and private property and personal liberty were respected in a degree which seems scarcely compatible with their public rapacity. And in the system of police now enforced a striking contrast was exhibited to the feeble yet direful dominion of Pius VI. under whose reign each individual became the arbiter of his own wrong, and in whose pontificate it was reckoned that 18,000 persons had been murdered in public and private quarrels in the ecclesiastical state alone.

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On the 20th of March, the ceremony of the inauguration of the new government was performed in the middle of the great piazza of St. Peter's. The consuls, stretching out their hands over the altar there erected, swore eternal hatred to monarchy, and fidelity to the republic. This solemn transaction was accompanied with bands of music and the firing of cannon, and at night the dome of St. Peter's was illuminated: but there was no shouting, no voluntary marks either of approbation or disapprobation. The people of Rome had lost every idea of liberty, and appeared to regard themselves as mere spectators of

BOOK XXIV. the scene, and to feel no emotion beyond that of stupid and ignorant surprize *.

1798. The next victim singled out by the rapacity of the directorial government of France was the antient and celebrated republic of the Helvetic confederacy. The name of Switzerland cannot be pronounced without emotion by those who have witnessed the happy effects of the rude and imperfect system of liberty enjoyed by the inhabitants of this secluded country, when compared with the oppression and misery resulting from the horrid despotism by which she was everywhere surrounded: "Là habite (says an elegant writer) un peuple simple, bienfaisant, brave, ennemi du faste, ami du travail, ne cherchant point d'esclaves, et ne voulant point des maîtres †."

Affairs of Switzerland.

On a survey of the constitutions of the several states which composed the Helvetic union, itself founded on the right of resistance to tyranny, it must excite no little surprize to find that the government of the greater cantons, whether Catholic or Protestant, was that of aristocracy, tempered and moderated indeed by a partial re-

* *Vide* DUPPA's Account of the Subversion of the Papal Government.

† Tableau de l' Histoire Moderne, par M. de MEHEGAN.

presentation at Zurich; but at Berne, Lucerne, Friburg, and Soleure, without the slightest mixture of democracy. On the other hand, it is equally remarkable, that the smaller cantons, Schweitz, Uri, Underwalden, Appenzel, Glaris, and Zug, were democratic, without the slightest mixture of aristocracy—Basle and Schaffhausen alone of this class inclining to the constitution of Zurich. In the cantons purely democratic the inhabitants at large met annually in an open field or plain to choose their magistrates; and the question was then put publicly to them, whether they chose to continue for another year the laws of their canton?

This political intermixture of the different cantons was extremely conducive to the happiness of the whole: and although the governments of the greater cantons were in themselves unfavorable, the established laws, manners, and customs of the country, were decidedly favorable, to civil freedom. The aristocratical canton of Berne, in particular, by far the largest and most powerful of the union, governing its subjects with paternal mildness and wisdom, the general effect produced was the public happiness; and the people felt themselves secure in person and in property. They were therefore content and satisfied, wishing not for changes, nor thinking

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of reforms. The just and moderate spirit of the government, by gaining the affections of the people, strengthened the barriers of its own authority, and erected the image of a free constitution on the incongruous basis of political despotism. "The magistrates of Berne (says a celebrated writer) *must* reign with prudence and equity, since they are unarmed in the midst of an armed nation*."

At the commencement of the French revolution the attention of all countries, and particularly of those which bordered upon France, were turned to the subject of government; and in Switzerland above all others—the inhabitants of which were astonished, on reflection, to find that they had so long submitted, and so tamely, to such defective forms of government. The aristocracy of Berne now began to feel its own weakness; but, far from introducing some voluntary and seasonable melioration of their own despotic constitution, they exerted every possible effort to crush in their birth those new principles of liberty which, however abused in practice, must ever be acknowledged in theory beautiful and just. "It is certain (says a writer of great authority on this point) that the repub-

* GIBBON.—*Vide* also COXE's Travels, and WOOD's History of Switzerland, &c. &c.

lic of Berne thinks itself obliged to a vigilance next to hostile, and to imprison or expel all the French whom they find in their territories*." This being the case, it would naturally follow, that the French government must regard that of Berne with an eye no less jealous than resentful; and symptoms of this reciprocal animosity in a very short time began to manifest themselves. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

In the autumn of 1789 several literary and scientific societies established at Berne, Lausanne, Basle, &c. transmitted congratulatory addresses to the French Convention upon the attainment of the national liberty: and in the similar societies of Zurich and Lucerne a very revolutionary spirit early displayed itself, which required the utmost wisdom to regulate, as it was impossible in the nature of things it could in the actual circumstances be extinguished. They had recently seen the natural and unalienable rights of man formally and publicly recognized by the most powerful nation upon earth—a nation with which their own was closely connected by contiguity and alliance; and, as is forcibly observed by the writer already cited, "the formal recognition by the sovereign power of an original right in the subject can never

* Burke's Memorial on the State of Affairs, 1791.

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be subverted, but by rooting up the radical principles of government, and even of society itself*."

In no part of the Helvetic territory had the revolutionary principles of France made greater progress than in the Pays-de-Vaud, an extensive district subject to the government of Berne: Lausanne, the capital of this delightful province, being the chief resort of intelligent strangers, and famous for the liberality and urbanity of its inhabitants. On the 14th of July, 1791, the anniversary of the French revolution was commemorated with great demonstrations of joy all over the Pays-de-Vaud and the neighbouring districts: patriotic toasts were drunk, French airs were sung, and the ensigns of liberty paraded with universal acclamation. The government of Berne, which trembled with rage and fear at the rapid diffusion of these sentiments, now at last, in an evil hour, resolved to interpose its sovereign authority, in order to counteract this great and growing mischief. A special tribunal was sent into the Pays-de-Vaud, under the protection of 2,000 soldiers, commanded by general d'Erlach, well known as an high and arbitrary aristocrat, with fifteen pieces of cannon. The troops took up their residence at Lausanne

* BURKE's Speech on the India Bill.

—the church of St. Francis, the hospital, the college, and the public granaries, being all turned into barracks. In order to strike terror into the inhabitants, two cannons, with lighted matches, were planted in the market-place. Other troops were stationed in different parts of the province, and the whole country was laid under military subjection. In vain the people of the Pays-de-Vaud enquired what was the crime of which they were accused? Had they been in insurrection? Had they taken arms against the government of Berne? Had they disobeyed any of their orders? Had they shewn any marks of disrespect to their bailiffs? No; none of these; they had merely testified in a public manner their approbation of the principles of the French revolution *.

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The high court having opened its commission, two of the principal citizens, Rosel and Muller de la Mothe, were tried, and sentenced to no less than twenty-five years' imprisonment to the dungeons of Chillon, an antique castle situated on the Lake of Geneva: others to inferior penalties. But the prosecution which, beyond all others, excited the greatest astonishment and indignation was that of M. de la Harpe, baron

* Present State of Switzerland, by H. M. Williams, Vol. II. p. 235.

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of Yens, a man of the first property and influence in the province, whose talents were of the highest class, and whose character was such as made him the object of universal esteem and reverence. This distinguished person, finding that it was intended to proceed against him with great severity, and for no other offence than that of having joined conspicuously in the celebration of the late anniversary, seasonably withdrew to Geneva, whence he wrote to the judges of the new tribunal, "that having received the most pressing warnings of his danger, he had thought it necessary to take this step; but that he was ready to appear before the court as soon as he had satisfactory assurance that his case would be impartially investigated." After being twice summoned, he was, on his non-appearance, accused of high-treason; and, being condemned by the court, he was sentenced to be beheaded, and his property was confiscated to the benefit of the state. Such were the measures adopted by the government of Berne, and enforced by others of a like tendency in the other aristocratic cantons, as if to demonstrate how ill founded were the hopes of those who aimed at a melioration of the existing constitution of Switzerland. In April 1792 the celebrated Gibbon returning to Lausanne, after a temporary and not very long absence, says, "I

never knew any place so much changed as Lausanne. Some are taken up, several are fled, many more are suspected and suspicious. All are silent; but it is the silence of fear and discontent." BOOK XXIV. 1798.

The virtuous and gallant La Harpe, thus cast off by his country, of which he was the ornament, and would have been, if needful, the defender, retired into France, and obtained an honorable command in the French army, distinguishing himself in the course of five successive years no less by his conduct than his courage. He fell in the spring of 1796, at an early period of the first Italian campaign of Bonaparte. His death overwhelmed the army with the deepest sorrow; and the conqueror of Italy, in his relation of it to the Directory, declared "that the republic had lost one of its most faithful citizens and bravest generals, and every soldier a comrade, who was as bold in the action as he was in discipline severe."

Notwithstanding the measures of precaution taken by the aristocracies of Switzerland, or rather in consequence of those measures, the spirit of political discontent increased to general and rooted disaffection throughout all the Protestant branches of the confederacy. For it is remarkable that, in the Catholic democracies of the union, Uri, Schweitz, Underwalden, and

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Zug, the spirit of religious bigotry, diligently and continually fostered by the priests, completely predominated at this crisis over that of civil liberty; and the French were, by the ignorant peasantry of these petty states, regarded with detestation, as heretics, infidels, and atheists:—and in the full enjoyment of liberty themselves, they did not seem to entertain a wish that it should, or an idea that it ought to, be extended beyond their own narrow and contracted limits.

Upon the declaration of war between Austria and France, this difference of sentiment strikingly appeared: a great majority of persons in the Protestant cantons shewing a marked predilection for the interests of the Gallic republic, while the Catholics evinced the utmost aversion to the new order of things in France, and even permitted the officers of Austria publicly to raise recruits in their towns and villages, while the ambassador of France was compelled to quit his usual residence at Soleure. The government of Berne, animated by the same spirit upon this grand topic of controversy, countenanced and encouraged the obnoxious proceedings of the Catholic cantons, and excited incurable jealousy on the part of France, by marching, at the period of the duke of Brunswic's invasion, a formidable military force to that part of the

French frontier separated from Switzerland by the lofty barrier of the Jura. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

The neighbouring republic of the Grisons also, though Protestant and democratic, shewed themselves on various occasions very inimical to the French. But of the political transactions of this rude and uncultivated people the detail would be tedious and uninstructive. For several years the general state of things altered little in Switzerland, only it was perceivable that the two opposing parties became more and more hostile, and the probability proportionally increased of some violent, bloody, and terrific catastrophe.

The fertile district of the Valteline, divided from the Helvetic territory by an high range of mountains, and properly a part of Lombardy, had been long subject to the tyranny of the Grisons. On the establishment of the Cisalpine republic, in the summer of 1797, the inhabitants of this province, indignant at the oppression they suffered, rose with one accord, drove away the Grison magistrates, and declared themselves free and independent. Both parties appealed to the decision of the French government; and, the cause being referred to general Bonaparte, a day was appointed for the determination of it, when the Valteline deputies appeared in readiness to sustain their claims; but the Grison government, for what reasons can-

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not be ascertained, omitted to support their pretensions in the same manner:—in consequence of which general Bonaparte declared in favor of the revolters, and they were immediately received into the union of the Cisalpine republic.

Towards the conclusion of the summer of 1797, the French government, having now terminated the war on the continent, resolved to avenge the insults and injuries which they either had, or pretended to have, received from the Swiss republic; and in order to afford a sure pretext for bringing matters to extremity, the following demands were made upon the confederacy by the French Directory. 1. The free navigation of the Lake of Lugano for their ally the Cisalpine republic. 2. A passage for 25,000 men through the Vallais, for general Bonaparte's army. 3. The dismission of Mr. Wickham, the English envoy at Berne, from the Helvetic territory—he having been, as was alleged, deeply engaged in all the plots and intrigues which, as they asserted, had been perpetually carrying on against them in Switzerland. 4. The redress of certain specific measures inimical to the French republic, chiefly those of the government of Berne; which, as the Directory affirmed, had publicly enrolled emigrants, and given shelter to French requisitionaries and deserters.

Hostile demands of the French Directory.

On the first notice of this hostile memorial, the court of London ordered the envoy Wickham to quit the territories of the republic, not choosing to hazard a formal dismission. And an Helvetic diet was summoned at Arau for the professed purpose of composing the differences between the two countries. After passing a month in fruitless debate, this assembly at length decreed the levy of the double contingent, amounting to 26,000 men; but the inhabitants of the generality of the cantons shewed an insuperable aversion to the service; and while the levy proceeded slowly and heavily, the French appeared in force under general Menard, in the month of January, 1798, upon the Genevan frontier. The whole of the Pays-de-Vaud, a great part of Berne, and the entire canton of Basle, were at once in a state of insurrection; and general Weiss, who was entrusted by the governments of Berne and Friburg with the command of their army, was compelled to retreat with precipitation towards Berne; and general Menard, marching forward, proclaimed to the Vaudois—peace, liberty, and fraternity. 1798.

On the return of general Weiss, a man of sense and moderation, to Berne, he represented in person to the senate, as he had before done by letter, the utter impossibility of making any effectual resistance against the arms of France,

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thus strengthened and supported by the spirit of disaffection. "In all our warlike preparations," said the general, "I see only the prognostics of a disastrous war and the signal of an useless effusion of blood. I am convinced that all the means of rigour you can employ will have no other result than that of spreading the revolution over the whole of Switzerland *."

The canton of Schweitz also exhorted in pressing terms the government of Berne "to prefer measures of conciliation to those of rigor, and to satisfy the Vaudois in their demands, as a sacrifice absolutely essential to the public good." Such was in substance also the advice given by the diet of Arau: but this just and wise policy was vehemently and eloquently opposed by the avoyer Steiguer, who possessed the chief influence in the senate of Berne, and deprecated by him as weak, timid, and disgraceful †. On the 13th of February, the Bernese government came to a late and reluctant resolution to send an embassy to the Directory, signifying "that they held it a sacred duty to declare their earnest wishes for peace with the French nation, and

* Letter of General Weiss to the Council of Berne, Jan. 24, 1798.

† *Vide* ZSCHOKKE's History of the Invasion of Switzerland, p. 108—118.

the re-establishment of the accustomed relations of amity and kindness; and that they will be ready to accommodate every point in dispute, as far as it can be done without injury to the independence of a free people." BOOK XXIV. 1798.

To this humiliating message the Directory deigned not to return any answer; but, through the medium of citizen Mengaud, their envoy in Switzerland, specified the conditions on which the former amity of the two nations might yet be restored:—1. That the canton of Berne should dismiss its antient magistrates, and suppress its secret council and council of war. 2. Until a new form of government shall be organized, a provisional one, founded on democratic principles, and excluding all the members of the antient government, shall be instituted. 3. The liberty of the press shall be immediately established. 4. All persons, Swiss or others, prosecuted on account of their political opinions, or of their refusal to march against the French, shall be indemnified.

On the receipt of this message the government of Berne, sensible too late of the folly of its former policy, but gathering courage from despair, resolved, after a violent struggle in the senate between the aristocrates, headed by the avoyer Steiguer and the general d'Erlach, and the moderates, supported by general Weiss, to

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declare to M. Mengaud, "that they never would open negotiations upon such demands as were contained in his message, and that they were determined not to permit any foreign power to prescribe a constitution to them." To enforce this resolution, general Weiss was superseded in his military command, which was conferred on his rival general d'Erlach. At this period general Brune arrived, and put himself at the head of the French army. Being in expectation of powerful reinforcements, he proposed an armistice of eight days for the accommodation of differences; which was, without difficulty, acceded to on the part of the Bernese, who desired only that each canton should remain free, to effect, according to its will, a change in its own government, without the interference of any foreign power.

Invasion of the French under general Brune.

In this interval the moderates, whose councils were over-ruled, having quitted their seats in the senate, the violent or jacobin party gained a temporary ascendency; and many of the aristocrates, from base and personal motives, terrified or bribed, joined in a formal abdication of their own power, and the appointment of a provisional administration, of which the jacobins Tiller and Bay, with their associates, were the principal members. The avoyer Steiguer would however take no part in this degrading trans-

action; but, with a heart bleeding for the fate of his country, resigned in mournful and indignant silence the insignia of his authority. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

Previous to the expiration of the armistice, infractions of which were alleged on both sides, general Brune attacked the town of Friburg, and, notwithstanding a bloody resistance, carried it by assault; and general Schawenburg, after defeating the troops of the canton, entered nearly at the same time the capital of Soleure. A summons was sent to Berne itself to open its gates to the French army. Such were the internal distractions by which this unhappy city was agitated, and as it were torn asunder, and such the indignation excited by the insolence of general Brune, who, in addition to his former demands, now required that Berne should receive a French garrison, that the proposition of the new administrative government to capitulate to the enemy was rejected, and the people loudly called for arms. Orders were therefore issued, in a moment of desperation rather than of courage, to general d'Erlach, to prepare for immediate hostilities. The Bernese, to the number of 18,000, took the field; but the two armies under the generals Brune and Schawenburg, having effected a junction, amounted to 50,000 men, followed by an immense train of artillery. Nevertheless the troops of the canton seemed

Patriotic resistance of the democratic cantons.

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resolutely determined to shed the last drop of their blood in defence of their country. The spirit of resistance to the French was not now confined to those who had ever been inveterate enemies to the revolution, but had diffused itself widely amongst the moderates, the real patriots and genuine friends of their country.

During the armistice, the council of Berne, seeing the storm of revolution gathering around them, had convoked the deputies of the communes to take part in their deliberations. The result of this laudable measure was a proclamation issued in their joint names, declaratory of their resolution to make such changes in the constitution of the government as the good of the country should require. And more particularly, that, in the space of a month, a commission should be established to propose the plan of a more perfect constitution, of which the equal representation of the people should be the basis: that all places in the administration and public employments in general should be accessible to every citizen, according to their respective merits: and that a constitution on this plan should be proposed in the space of twelve months for the approbation of the people; a provisional government being in the mean time appointed for the execution of the necessary functions of government. In Zurich also an actual

amelioration of the government took place; and the regencies of the cantons of Lucerne, Schaffhausen, Soleure, and Friburg, issued proclamations similar to those of Berne. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

Had the French Directory therefore been actuated by laudable or really patriotic views, they would have testified their satisfaction with the important concessions now made; they would have withdrawn their troops from the Swiss territory; and have contented themselves with acting in future, between the respective governments and the people at large, the noble and generous part of a common mediator and friend. But the general tenor of their conduct afforded no ground for any such hopes. In the present exigency, the Bernese, apparently abandoned by their confederates, whose contingents, with the exception of Zurich and Schweitz, had been vainly demanded, were left almost entirely to their own unassisted efforts: and the authority of government, amid the conflict of factions, being well-nigh annihilated, the real force of this single but powerful canton was far from being fully exerted. General d'Erlach took a strong position about three leagues from Berne, near the village of Frauenbrun, where, on the morning of the 5th of March, he was attacked with a force more than double to that which he

Reduction of Switzerland by the French.

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commanded, by the generals Brune and Schawenburg, throughout the whole extent of his line. The combat lasted several hours, and the Swiss yielded not the field of battle till they had made and suffered a dreadful carnage. Slowly retreating from post to post, they relinquished none without a new and desperate conflict; but the heroic bravery of this unfortunate army was of no avail against the superior force and irresistible artillery of the French; and, after losing half their numbers, the remainder were at length compelled, in the utmost confusion, to seek for refuge in the mountains of Thun. The bridge over the river Aar leading to Berne being forced, the government capitulated, and the city was happily rescued from the horrors of an assault.

Furious at their defeat, the Swiss soldiery turned their rage upon their own officers, whom they charged with involving them in this misfortune by their treachery or misconduct; and several were sacrificed to their blind and brutal rage. The general d'Erlach and the avoyer Steiguer, who had assumed the sword on laying down the gown, left the army secretly: the latter, traversing the lake of Thun and the mountains of Underwalden, reached the Austrian dominions in safety; but the former, having been discovered in his flight, was seized on by

the peasants and savagely murdered. An opinion being very prevalent amongst the inhabitants of the canton that these two persons had contributed beyond all others to the calamities of their country, the violent death of the one was less lamented than the fortunate escape of the other. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

The oligarchy of Berne was now annihilated, the Bernese army was destroyed or dispersed, and the French professed to come in the character of protectors and deliverers; yet the public treasury of Berne, the stores, the arsenal, the cannon, and all the property of the state, was without scruple confiscated to the use of "the great nation," exclusive of the heavy contributions levied throughout almost the whole extent of Switzerland.

After a short interval, a general convention was summoned to meet at Arau, in order to form a republican constitution for, or rather to force a constitution upon, the Thirteen Cantons, on the model of that of France, one and indivisible. But here a new spirit of opposition and resistance displayed itself. While the inhabitants of the great aristocratical cantons, Catholic and Protestant, acceded with little difficulty to this proposition, deputies from the small democratic cantons of Uri, Schweitz, Underwalden, Glaris, and Zug, which were passionately attach-

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ed to their existing forms of government, assembling at Brennen, sent (March 16) a declaration of their sentiments to general Brune, stating, "that the constitution of their government had been for many ages a democracy, founded upon the sovereignty of the people and the rights of man; that they possessed nothing but their religion, their liberty, and their flocks, which they hoped the French nation would permit them to enjoy in peace; engaging on their side never to take up arms against it, or to ally themselves with its enemies. The necessity of defending our liberty," say these mountaineers, "can alone put arms into our hands."

A mild answer was returned by general Brune, assuring them of the continuance of the friendship of the French republic, and that it was not among its designs to carry its arms into their territory. On the 22d of March, nevertheless, the French commander issued a proclamation, addressed to the citizens of *all* the cantons, declaring the plan of an Helvetic republic one and indivisible to be finally decided upon. This alarming declaration was regarded by the democratic cantons as the signal of war. A second meeting of the congress at Brennen, to which deputies from the canton of Appenzel and the Rheinthal, together with the country and city of St. Gall, were now admitted, was convened

April 1; and it was finally determined that their present government should be defended against whatever attack should be made upon it. Unlike the feverish and transitory resolutions of the aristocracy of Berne in its expiring agonies, this was the firm, steady, and unanimous determination of a people devoted to the cause of democratic freedom—productive, beyond all other causes, of great and wonderful effects. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

General Schawenburg, who succeeded general Brune at this period in the chief command, now, therefore, led his troops to this odious contest, against the combined army of the democratic cantons, which was composed of the hardy descendants of those brave patriots who had in antient times resisted, with such glorious success, the tyranny of the house of Austria. The force assembled by the cantons did not in the whole amount to more than 11,000 men, who were commanded by general Paravicini, an officer not destitute of military skill or experience. The troops of Schweitz had at their head Aloys Reding, a man in whose talents and virtue his country justly confided, and who was descended from a family celebrated in the annals of its history. After various successes, Paravicini made himself master of the town of Rapperschwyl, on the Lake of Zurich; and Reding, about the same time, of the city of Lucerne. But the

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French approaching in great force, Lucerne was almost immediately evacuated; and, in an attack made by them on general Paravicini, near the Lake of Zurich, April 30, that able officer, after great but unavailing exertions, and repeatedly repulsing the enemy, was compelled to abandon the field, being himself dangerously wounded. The chief command then devolved on Aloys Reding, who forthwith took possession of the famous heights of Morgarten. "Immoveable as the rocks on which they stood," says the well-informed historian of these events, "they waited courageously for an occasion to devote themselves for their country. They wished to renew, upon the green heights of Morgarten, the sacred monument of the antient valor of the Swiss, and to leave to their posterity, if not freedom, at least a memorable example of what a free people can do in its defence *."

On the 2d May, at ten in the morning, the French appeared in force before the heights, and attacked with their accustomed impetuosity. On this occasion the Swiss fought not like inexperienced herdsmen, but as veterans in the service. "None," says the hi-

* Zschokke's History of the Invasion of Switzerland, p. 296.

storian, "were heard to lament over their own wounds, or the death of their comrades. Every one envied the lot of him who on that memorable day fell in the cause of his country." Not being able to make any impression in this quarter, the French, by the superiority of their numbers, were enabled to detach a strong body of troops, who with little difficulty forced a passage, through the valley of Ensiedlin, into the very heart of the canton of Schweitz. Aloys Reding immediately quitting his position, advanced boldly towards the enemy, and a second engagement took place, in which the Swiss charged the French soldiery with bayonets fixed, and made a dreadful carnage—pursuing the fugitive foe beyond the plain of Morgarten, the antient scene of Swiss valor. But the grand object in view was gained by the French general, who had penetrated with his main force into the territory of Schweitz, which was the soul of the confederacy, and the centre of the military operations. Conscious of the danger, or rather of the ruin, which impended over them, but incapable of any disgraceful submission, it was at length resolved to demand of the French general "a suspension of arms for twenty-four hours, in order that the people might have time to convene in a general assembly, and that it should also be stipulated

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with him, that besides security for religion, persons, and property, the canton of Schweitz should also obtain an assurance of not being occupied by French troops."

In the different engagements which had taken place in this rough and rugged country, the French had obtained no laurels, and general Schawenburg thought it expedient to accede implicitly to the terms proposed. A convention to this effect was consequently concluded upon, and signed May 4, and the canton of Schweitz, on their part, agreed to accept the new Helvetic constitution one and indivisible.

Conformably to the terms of the convention, the French withdrew from the limits of the canton, not without expressing the highest admiration of the valor of its inhabitants. The loss of the French in this inglorious warfare was computed at about six thousand of their bravest troops killed and wounded: while that of the Swiss scarcely amounted to as many hundreds; but they were men whose loss their country could ill sustain—martyrs and patriots, "who thought it sweet to sprinkle with their blood their natal soil, and to find the bed of death on the fields rendered illustrious by their ancestors*."

* Zschokke, p. 336.

To the neighbouring cantons similar terms were allowed by the French commander; but Underwalden refusing to ratify this agreement, rejecting peremptorily the amicable overtures repeatedly made,—and as if they felt themselves contaminated by the correspondence, at length returning the letters sent them without breaking the seal,—the French towards the conclusion of the summer marched a second army into that canton: and the men of Underwalden assembling their entire force, aided by divers corps of volunteers from the neighbouring districts, one unconquerable spirit animating the whole, a most memorable battle was fought, on the 8th and 9th of September, on the shores of the Lake of Lucerne, near the town of Standtz, in which prodigies of valor were performed by these genuine sons of freedom. On the first of these days no impression could be made by the French; and upon the second the battle was renewed with redoubled fury. On one side were skill, discipline, and far superior numbers; upon the other, the enthusiasm of religion, and the inextinguishable ardor of patriotism. In courage, neither could boast the superiority—every individual was an hero. For a time the bayonet of the soldier seemed a feeble weapon compared with the massy club of the mountaineer; and the ar-

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tillery of the French was almost silenced by the vast fragments of rock rolled down from the apparently inaccessible heights above them. Women and children rushed undaunted upon the invaders. No advance was made but over the bodies of the slain; and the day closed before the battle was decided. At length, destroyed rather than defeated, the shattered remains of the Swiss army, under covert of the increasing darkness, took refuge in the town of Standtz, which was carried by storm, and in a moment converted into a scene of carnage and desolation. The beautiful valley of Standtz, seated at the base of lofty mountains on whose summits winter holds eternal reign, was laid entirely waste, the houses of the inhabitants burnt, the churches demolished, and all who were found in arms exterminated without mercy.

"War to thrones and peace to cottages" had been formerly proclaimed as the grand maxim of the Gallic revolution; but the monstrous contrast between the principles and practices of the French appears in no instance perhaps so striking as in this, where, with the name of freedom on their lips, they imbrued their sacrilegious hands in the blood of a brave and unoffending people, who had for ages inhabited these hallowed and sequestered haunts, where LIBERTY, banished from kingdoms and empires, had been

received with rustic and pastoral honors, thenceforth making this simple but sublime temple of Nature her chosen and favorite abode *. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

To pursue the progress of French rapacity and tyranny, as exercised by the profligate instruments of the French directors, Mengaud and Rapinat, would be foreign to the purpose of this history: it must suffice to mention, that the new constitution, upon the French model, was at length adopted by all the Helvetic States—Lucerne being fixed upon as the seat of government; and that a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, was subsequently concluded between the Gallic and Helvetic republics, nominally at least, on terms of equality and reciprocal advantage.

It is proper to add, that, in the course of these

* "She hail'd her chosen home—these dark woods rung
As her bold war-song on the rocks she sung—
She who once call'd these hills her own, and found
Her loveliest sojourn 'mid the hallowed ground,
Blessing the spot where, shaded high with wood,
And deck'd with simple flowers, her altar stood,
FREEDOM, insulted, sees, as pale she flies,
A monster-phantom in her name arise!
On weltering carcases it seems to stand
Waving a dim-seen dagger in its hand:—
Earth fades beneath its footsteps, and around
Long sighs and distant dying shrieks resound!"

BOWRING' *Sorrows of Switzerland.*

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transactions, the city of Geneva, which had been within the space of a few years the scene of succession of revolutions, was at length united, probably for ever, to the French republic—being formed into the capital of a department, under the name of the department of the Lake of Leman.

State of affairs in France.

Notwithstanding the despotic authority exercised by the directors since the revolution of Fructidor, the election of the new third in the legislative assembly, during the spring of the present year, was very opposite to their views and wishes. They sent, in consequence, a message to the Council of Five Hundred, complaining of the existence of an anarchical conspiracy to make the primary and elective assemblies the nurseries of future plots, and expressing their hopes that the council would not permit men loaded with every crime to sit in the legislature.

An obsequious committee was immediately appointed to make a report upon this message, which was brought up on the 7th of May. It stated the necessity of excluding from the legislature the partizans of the two great factions which agitated the republic—the anarchists, and the royalists. And a decree was forthwith framed, annulling the elections of several departments *in toto*, besides those of very many

individuals. The control of the press was also, with equal servility, continued for another year. BOOK XXIV.

About the same period the negotiator Treilhard was chosen to succeed François Neufchâteau, who was the director destined by lot to vacate his office. 1789. Election of Treihard as a member of the Directory.

The war department had been filled with equal incapacity and profligacy, since the 18th of Fructidor, by general Scherer, a near relation of the director Rewbel; and every other department in the state exhibited a similar portrait of inability and rapacity:—so that the directorial government became both odious and contemptible to all descriptions of persons throughout the nation; and the more the Directory multiplied their tyrannical precautions, the more they enhanced the number of their enemies, and the imminence of their danger. Incapacity and oppression of the directorial government.

Holland, which, by a wise and singular policy adopted at the period of the conquest of that country by France, and since not materially violated, had been left in a very great measure to take care of its own concerns, now became the scene of some revolutionary movements. "No proscription, no popular crime, had stained the tranquil subversion of its antient government. It had only to bear the residence and maintenance of 24,000 Frenchmen, whose number was never effective, and whose conduct in general Affairs of Holland.

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did not excite complaints *." A suspicion had been, however, for some time entertained in both countries that the zeal displayed by some members of the Batavian convention for the antient modes of federative organization arose from a secret predilection to the stadtholderian government; and the naval defeat of Camperdown was ascribed by many to the treasonable disaffection of some persons high in station and influence. At the latter end of the year 1797, citizen Charles de la Croix was nominated ambassador to the republic of Holland, with a view to effect a revolutionary change which had been previously concerted with the Dutch general Daendals.

Partial change in the government of Holland.

On the 22d of January, 1798, troops were posted at the entrance of the hall of assembly, the commanding officer of which arrested such of the deputies as were on the proscribed list, to the number of twenty-one, together with the six members of the commission for foreign affairs. The assembly, thus purged, assumed the appellation of "The Constituent Assembly of the Batavian People," and elected a provisional Executive Directory. A general oath was imposed

* This is the remarkable and candid testimony of a most determined anti-revolutionist, M. Mallet du Pan.—*Vide* "British Mercury, September, 1799."

of unalterable hatred to stadtholderianism, aristocracy, federalism, and anarchy: and Holland seemed sunk into the state of a province abjectly dependent upon the will of De la Croix, the confidential agent of the French Directory. A constitution formed on the basis of the French was soon prepared, and with no difficulty accepted by the Dutch nation: but the Conventional Assembly, on the 5th of May, thought proper to declare, "that although they were virtually dissolved by the acceptance of the constitution, yet the dangers which still threatened the country had determined the members to agree that no renewal should take place that year, but that the present deputies should form themselves into a legislative body, and continue their functions together with the present Directory."

This act of despotism rouzed the phlegm of the Batavians into a very active and, probably, unexpected resistance. General Daendals, who had promoted the exclusion of the obnoxious members in January, now distinguished himself by the decided part which he took in opposition to the present measure, which was supported by the whole influence of the French ambassador and agent, Charles de la Croix.

The Dutch Directory having issued orders for the arrest of the general, that officer made his

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escape, and, repairing to Paris, made so good a defence of his conduct to the French Directory, that he was enabled, under the sanction of their approbation, to return to Holland, where he was received with acclamations of applause. In a short time a new scene of cabal and resistance opened: The ministers of the different state departments uniting with Daendals, and erecting themselves into a provisionary executive power, summoned all the officers of the Dutch troops before them; who, entering entirely into their views, took the new oath of allegiance proposed; and general Daendals, at the head of a strong military force, lost no time in surrounding both the Directory and the legislative body, as well as in securing the person of the ambassador De la Croix. Two of the directors had given in their timely resignation; two others effected their escape; Van Langen, the fifth, was put under arrest: De la Croix received his dismission, and returned to Paris. The primary assemblies being convoked, apparently without any restraint, elected the new legislative body, to whom the provisional administration, on its meeting, surrendered their powers. In the month of August the Executive Directory were nominated, and the new directorial government completely organized; and all these events passed not only without any opposition from the

French Directory, but with their evident implicit concurrence.

1798. Disastrous expedition of the English, under general Coote, to Ostend.

In the month of May, this year, a futile and ill-concerted attempt was made by the English government to interrupt the internal navigation between Holland, Flanders, and France, by destroying the basin, gates, and sluices, of the Bruges' Canal; the command of the expedition being entrusted to general Coote and commodore Popham, both officers of distinguished merit. By five o'clock in the morning of the 19th, the troops were disembarked with their artillery, miners, petards, &c. and soon after ten the works were blown up with a violent explosion. But the surf now unfortunately run so high that it was impossible to re-imbark. As a *feint*, according to general Coote's official account, a peremptory summons was sent to the governor of Ostend to surrender that important place; but the answer received was, "that this would not be done till the garrison were buried under the ruins." The English, to the number of 1,200 men, now endeavoured to entrench themselves on the sand-hills near the shore, where they were early the next morning attacked by a very superior force, moving in different columns. After a short but gallant contest, in which they were completely over-powered, their front being broken, and their flanks turned, general Coote

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himself being severely wounded, they were compelled to surrender to the enemy, by whom both men and officers were treated with the greatest attention and generosity; and the damage done to the sluices was in a few weeks perfectly repaired.

Island of Minorca captured.

Early in November, the island of Minorca was attacked apparently by surprize, and captured, after a resistance so short and feeble as to occasion a suspicion of treachery, without the loss of a man;—the garrison, consisting of near 4,000 men, under a pusillanimous governor, Don Juan de Quesada, surrendering to the British commander, general Stuart, under an engagement of being conveyed to the nearest port belonging to his Catholic majesty.

Port-au-Prince in St. Domingo evacuated by the English.

In the course of the year, the town of Port-au-Prince in St. Domingo, with the settlement of St. Marc and its dependencies, were evacuated by the British forces, and immediately taken possession of by the French general Toussaint de l'Ouverture, a native of the island, of the negro race, and formerly a slave—a man of great talents, and a principal leader in the late revolt, who, by acquiring the confidence of the inhabitants, had, in a very great degree, succeeded in restoring order and harmony in that long-distracted country. And thus ended those dreams of conquest which had led to such fa-

tally disastrous and impracticable attempts!— attempts which had for successive years made this island the charnel-house and tomb of the British soldiery *. The dependence of general Touissant upon the French directorial government was manifestly little more than nominal; and he was suspected of harbouring lofty and aspiring views of establishing himself in the permanent possession of the authority vested in him. 1798.

There can be no doubt but that St. Domingo was intended by the court of London to constitute a part, at least, of the *indemnity* which was so much insisted upon at the commencement of the war. Colonel Whitelock, who commanded the first expedition to this country, in the proclamation published by him on his arrival (October 8, 1793), declared, "that it was by persuasion rather than by force that he would conquer; that his majesty will only have *subjects*

* According to the statement of Mr. Bryan Edwards, the number left alive and fit for service, at the end of the year 1797, was not more than 3,000 men.—About 12,000 land-forces and 5,000 seamen had, in the space of three years, fallen a sacrifice to that pestilential climate. In April, 1796, the 82d regiment disembarked 980 men from Gibraltar, and in ten weeks they were reduced to 350. Hompesch's regiment of hussars was reduced in about the same time from 1090 strong to 300 men.

EDWARDS's *History of the West Indies*, vol. iii.

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worthy of his protection and of the favors and advantages which the British government secures to them. His majesty," says this commander, "is willing to preserve to you all your rights. I accordingly declare to you, in his royal name, that, *as soon as peace shall be established*, you will have a colonial assembly to regulate, establish, and enable you to exercise, those rights." Such were the flattering delusions under the influence of which the English government entered into the present ruinous and destructive war.

Domestic occurrences.

The interior tranquillity of Great Britain was this year undisturbed by any memorable incident; and the public attention was wholly engrossed by reviews, encampments, and military evolutions and manœuvres—almost every man being now a soldier, and enrolled in the national conscription.

Mr. Fox struck out of the list of privy counsellors.

On the 9th of May his majesty, calling in council for the council-book, was pleased to strike out the name of Mr. Fox from the list of privy counsellors;—posterity will decide how wisely and how well. It is the just boast of Mr. Fox, that never, in consequence of his counsels, has the wealth of the nation been unavailingly expended, or a single life unnecessarily sacrificed. By the counsels of others, whose names are still inscribed on the fatal roll, has the present reign been rendered an almost per-

petual spectacle of blood and horror. To them has it been owing that the unexampled splendors of the morning of this reign have been converted into a night of impenetrable darkness. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

In consequence of the numerous prosecutions instituted since the proclamation of 1792, at the suit of the crown, for real or pretended libels against the government, the liberty of the press was virtually annihilated, and scarcely would any author write, or printer publish, any tract in opposition to the measures of administration. In the spring of this year, the bishop of Landaff, once the eloquent and accomplished advocate of liberty, having published a *candid* and courtly pamphlet, tending very artfully to reconcile the minds of men to the existing system and all its concomitant abominations, a most spirited answer to it immediately appeared from the pen of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, a name known in the first ranks of literature, and honored for his extraordinary attainments in classical erudition, by the learned in every country throughout Europe. In speaking of the war tax, styled "the Triple Assessment," which grasped at the tenth of every man's income, and of which the bishop of Landaff had expressed his entire approbation, as a just and wise measure of finance, this spirited and patriotic writer indignantly says—"This measure was not adopt- Prosecution of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield.

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ed by Mr. Pitt either for its wisdom or its justice, but because the funding system can be pursued no longer.—In truth, ministers begin to feel that our expenditure is that millstone which will infallibly sink them and their system together in perdition; and it is very doubtful whether their profligacy and insanity have left political salvation practicable to all the united wisdom and virtue of the country."—The power of the ministers he justly states to be irresistible, notwithstanding the palpable inability, and the acknowledged inefficiency, of their measures:—"For I almost question (thus he boldly expresses himself) whether a dozen men at all distinguished for intellect, and virtue, and political disquisition, who are at this hour the advocates of the present ministry, can be found in Britain, 'from old Belerium to the northern main,' not connected in fact or expectancy, by themselves or their relatives, with some who depend on the emoluments of the established system." He goes on to give his opinion, "that could the French make an effective landing in England, the kingdom would be lost for ever. The same cause which has facilitated the progress of the republicans on the continent would operate as powerfully for them in this country also—namely, a degree of poverty and wretchedness in the lower orders of the community, which, especially

in their present state of depravity and ignorance, will render the chances, even from confusion, of any change desirable.—My life and my books (says this philosophical politician) are all the personalities that I value, and neither of them, for I have not tasted *lotus*, shall be hazarded in defence of the present administration. If the French come, they shall find me at my post, a watchful centinel in my proper box—my study, among the venerable dead; sometimes investigating the origin of man and primæval history, by turning the dark lanthorn of heathen records, or trimming the everlasting lamp of Moses; sometimes musing with the divine professors of the tuneful art on subjects of taste and fancy; and sometimes meditating with the men of Galilee on mortality and immortality. No systems of the many made for one, no zeal in support of frontless corruption and every evil work, shall dip my hands in the blood of men!

Non res Romanæ, perituraque regna—

Let those who have brought us to this most alarming crisis step forward in the day of danger, and fight the battles of their Baal and their Mammon."—Three of the publishers of this pamphlet, Jordan, Cuthell, and Johnson, were immediately prosecuted by the attorney-general for this offence, and, being convicted, were sentenced to different degrees of punishment. And,

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in the sequel, the learned and eminent author himself underwent the same fate; being condemned to pay a fine of one hundred pounds, and to suffer two years' imprisonment. In order, no doubt, to hide this transaction from the garish eye of day, he was, after a short interval, removed from the King's Bench to the common gaol of Dorchester *.

The war between France and Austria being to appearance terminated, and the invasion of England given up as an hopeless and impracticable attempt, it was become a question of great importance, and of no little embarrassment, what should be done with the immense armies actually on foot? Of the generals employed by the Directory, Bonaparte had been the most uniformly successful, possessed the most com-

* Unfortunately for his family, for his friends, and for the literary world in general, that learned and virtuous man, who, after many years' exertion in the cause of liberty, at length became the victim of ministerial resentment, died in a few weeks subsequent to his release from the two years' confinement, which he had with exemplary patience and fortitude undergone in the prison of Dorchester. Mr. Wakefield departed this life September 9, 1801. The mild and softened spirit with which this distinguished character sustained the sufferings consequent on his prosecution strikingly illustrated the beautiful observation of Lord Bacon: "Virtue tried by adversity bears some similitude to certain aromatic herbs, which are most fragrant when they are crushed."

manding talents, and incomparably the largest share of popularity. His ardent and active genius, not satisfied with the glory already acquired, and the victories already won, grasped at something yet greater and higher: and the subversion of the British empire in the East struck his mind as an enterprize which would raise his name to a level with those of the proudest conquerors in antient or modern times. The first step towards the accomplishment of this vast and romantic project was the invasion and occupation of Egypt, which he figured to himself as an easy task. Thence, before England could be apprized of his purpose, he conceived that vessels might be procured to transport the greater part of his army, from some of the ports on the Red Sea, across the Arabian Gulf to the western coast of Hindostan, where the sultan of Mysore, Tippoo Saib, the powerful ally of France, was ready to join him with all his forces. The Directory, jealous probably of the great political and military influence of Bonaparte, gave all possible encouragement to this design, which at once freed them from a dangerous rival, and promised to add new laurels to the national wreath of victory.

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Invasion of Egypt under general Bonaparte.

The project in contemplation was obscurely intimated to the Council of Five Hundred, in a report made by Eschassereaux (April 1798) on

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the subject of colonization, wherein he states "the advantages which would result from the regeneration of a country which was the first theatre of civilization in the universe." The immense preparations which had been for some months going on, chiefly in the port of Toulon, denoted an enterprize of no ordinary magnitude, and of a nature very uncommon. A great number of learned and scientific men * were selected to accompany this expedition; and with the usual stores of carnage and desolation were stowed instruments of knowledge in all its departments, practical and philosophical. Curiosity wasted itself in conjecture; for though Egypt had been publicly pointed out as the place of destination, many refined so far as to imagine that upon this very account it could not be the real object in view.

At length, every thing being in perfect readiness, general Bonaparte sailed from Toulon (May 20) with fifteen sail of the line and frigates, under the conduct of a very able naval officer, admiral Brueys, accompanied by more than 200 transports. On the 9th of June this great armament presented itself before the famous island of Malta, and made a general

* No less, in all the different departments of science, than 121. Vide Denon's *Travels through Egypt.*

landing of troops and artillery upon the coast, with scarcely a shew of resistance. No sooner had the cannonade commenced, than the strongest symptoms of disorder and disaffection to the existing government were apparent, and rose in a short time to such a height, that the grand master, count Hompesch, and the knights, sitting in council, were compelled, the doors of the council-chamber being burst open by the hands of lawless violence, to assent to an immediate capitulation; and the town and fortress of Valetta, with the whole island, was ignominiously surrendered on certain specified conditions—one of which, though never executed or thought of afterwards, was, that the grand master should receive for life an annual pension of 300,000 livres. Thus easily did the French acquire one of the finest and most commodious harbours in the Mediterranean, defended by strong and almost impregnable works, and which had for ages past been regarded as one of the bulwarks of Christendom against the inroads of Ottoman power.

After leaving a garrison of 4,000 men in Malta, the French armament, now increased by sixty transports from Civita-Vecchia, and having on board not less than 40,000 troops, chiefly of the veteran armies of Italy, kept their course to the north-east, sailing by the

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island of Candia. The English fleet, which was of equal or superior force, under the command of admiral Nelson, who had already highly distinguished himself by his naval prowess, after seeking the French in vain off Toulon, arrived at Malta two days after their departure from that place. He then directed his course towards Alexandria; but not finding the enemy there he stood on to Cyprus. Scarcely was the English fleet out of sight, when the French appeared in view; and on the 1st of July the French admiral cast anchor on the Egyptian coast; and general Bonaparte immediately landed his troops, although the weather was rough, and the sea ran high and boisterous. On the 5th he marched forward to the city of Alexandria, which—the summons sent by the French commander being disregarded—he took by assault, and, in order probably to strike terror and preclude future resistance, with a great slaughter of the Arabs and Mamelouks who defended it*. The appearance of this celebrated city fell prodigiously short of the romantic ideas formed by the sanguine imaginations of the French. Of the antient Alexandria, renowned

* General Berthier nevertheless states in his narrative, "that the troops entered Alexandria in express opposition to the orders of their commander."—*Vide* "Relation des Campagnes du General Bonaparte," &c.

for its commerce, its industry, its population, and magnificence, no traces were left but scattered and broken monuments, still sublime in ruin—such as the remains of obelisks and columns of granite, marble, and porphyry, inscribed with hieroglyphics nearly defaced; bases, shafts, and capitals, lying in melancholy disorder—the famous pillar of Pompey alone, with that bearing the name of Cleopatra, exhibiting themselves in a state of perfect preservation. To these may be added numerous baths and catacombs, with the mouldering and massive fragments of temples, particularly that formerly dedicated to the sun. The modern city presented only a wretched and confused heap of huts rather than houses; the streets unpaved, narrow, noisome through filth; and the inhabitants stupid, ignorant, barbarous, and hostile. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

The port of Alexandria, now no longer the emporium of the world, is divided into two spacious bays, separated by a mole extending to the rock on which the celebrated Pharos formerly stood.

The address of general Bonaparte to his army, on their landing, was admirably adapted to the purpose of this eastern invader. "The people (said he) with whom you are now going to establish an intercourse are Mahometans. The first article of their faith is, 'There is no God

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but God, and Mahomet is his prophet.' Do not contradict them. Treat their muftis and imans with respect, as you have done the rabbis and bishops.—The Roman legions protected all religions. You will find here usages different from those of Europe. You will reconcile yourselves to them by custom." In a proclamation addressed to the people of Egypt, after the taking of Alexandria, he thus adroitly practises on their credulity and their prejudices:—"You will be told that I come to destroy your religion. Do not believe it. Reply, that I am come to restore your rights, to punish usurpers, and that I reverence, more than the Mamelouks themselves, God, his prophet Mahomet, and the Koran.—If Egypt is their farm, let them shew the lease that God has given them of it.—There were formerly among you great cities, great canals, and a great commerce. What has destroyed them all? What but the injustice and tyranny of the Mamelouks?—Cadies, sheiks, imans, and tchisbadjees, inform the people that we are the friends of the Mussulmans!"—In this modern crusade liberty served as a pretext no less commodious to the purposes of ambition, than in the antient that of religion.

From Alexandria the route of the army lay across the desert to the Nile. Two leagues below Cairo that immense stream divides itself

into two branches, one of which, running westerly, falls into the sea at Rosetta, and the other to the eastward at Damietta. The intermediate country is called the Delta, and is extremely fertile. Along the exterior sides of the two branches runs a narrow slip of cultivated land, with occasional openings between the rising grounds; beyond which are the Deserts, extending on the left to Libya, on the right to the Red Sea. The march of the army to Rosetta completely dispelled what yet remained of the fond and flattering ideas which the French had indulged respecting Egypt. They trod for more than forty miles over a burning sand, utterly destitute of verdure, of water, and refreshments—fainting with heat, with thirst, and fatigue. Their arrival at Rosetta opened to them, however, a scene of comparative delight. This city, much superior to Alexandria, situated on the banks of the Nile, six miles only from the sea, is surrounded by a green and fertile country, abounding with palm, citron, pomegranate, and orange-trees, with other productions of the warmer climates—exhibiting a ravishing spectacle to those who had just been traversing the fiery and desolate wilderness*.

* An ingenious descriptive poet, sacrificing to the muses

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1798. Victory of the Pyramids.

Leaving a garrison at Rosetta, the army continued their march along the banks of the Nile to the city of Grand Cairo, accompanied by a flotilla, which carried the ammunition and provisions. They were, nevertheless, under the necessity of proceeding with caution, on account of the frequent and desultory attacks of the Arabs. On the arrival of general Bonaparte near Giseh, three leagues from Cairo (July 22) he found Murad Bey, one of the chiefs of the Mamelouks, who had assembled his whole force to oppose the farther progress of the French army, which was flanked on the left by the Nile, and on the right by the celebrated pyramids, those indestructible masses—the wonder of ages, and which seem to mock the ravages of time. The charge of the Mamelouks, who were all mounted on swift and managed horses, and who were equally dextrous in throwing the lance or wield-

amid the brazen din of arms, has thus celebrated the charms of "proud Rosetta:"

"There richly deck'd with sun-reflecting towers,
Fann'd by the fragrance of her citron bowers,
High o'er her head the tall palmetto spreads;
Low at her feet its sweets the myrtle sheds;
Warm round the spot the glowing orange blooms,
And poignant lemons scatter fresh perfumes."

CLIFFORD'S *Egypt*.

ing the sabre, was beyond expression furious: but being wholly devoid of military skill and discipline, they were repulsed with prodigious slaughter. Having abandoned the field in confusion, the camp of the assailants, and 400 camels laden with baggage, fell into the hands of the victors; and the shattered remains of the Mamelouk army retreated under the conduct of Murad Bey into Upper Egypt. After this encounter, which received the appellation of the Battle of the Pyramids, general Bonaparte entered Grand Cairo in triumph*;—presiding in person soon after this event at the annual ceremony which takes place on the overflowing of the Nile; and employing himself with great assiduity in the arrangements necessary for the interior administration of the Lower Egypt, now completely in his possession.

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Capture of Grand Cairo.

Notwithstanding the military successes of the French, they were harassed with incessant fatigue, and irritated by perpetual disappointment. "Egypt," said M. Lacuée, an officer of rank in the French army, in a letter addressed to a friend and relation in France, "bears not the slightest resemblance to what has been said of it by our

* Hujus in adventu jam nunc et Caspia Regna
Responsis horrent Divûm; et Mœotica tellus,
Et septemgemini turbant trepida ostia Nili.

VIRGIL.

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writers. The natives, degraded by slavery, are relapsed into the savage state—retaining nothing of their former civilization, but superstition and intolerance. In a word, this country is nothing at present. It merely offers magnificent recollections of the past, and vast but distant hopes of the future*." The army now began anxiously to speculate upon their expedition to India: "We do not know," says another French officer, in an intercepted letter, "whether we shall stay in these new regions, or carry our conquests farther;—the army, though victorious, will terminate its career, by perishing miserably, if our government persists in its ambitious projects†." But the general himself, as it appears, had by this time totally relinquished his Indian chimæras, and cherished the idea of speedily returning to France, leaving the future and difficult task of maintaining the conquests he had made to others. "The conquest of Egypt," says the general, in a letter to his brother Joseph Bonaparte, dated July 28, "has been sufficiently disputed to add another leaf to the military glory of this army. Egypt is the richest country in the world, in wheat, rice, pulse, and cattle; but barbarism is here at its height. I think of being in France

* Intercepted Correspondence. † Ditto.

in two months. Take your measures so that I may have a country-seat at my arrival, either in the neighbourhood of Paris, or in Burgundy. I reckon on passing the winter there*.

It was probably impracticable, had the French general been disposed to persevere in his original project, to collect a sufficient number of vessels on the Red Sea, adapted to the purpose of transporting his army, and its appendages, to Hindostan. And an obstacle no less unexpected than formidable arose to the execution of this design, in consequence of the English admiral Rainier, who commanded a small squadron in those seas, having taken possession of the Island of Perim, situated between the two points, forming the Straits of Babel-mandel, which constitutes the sole communication between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Cambaya. But an event of vast magnitude and importance, totally unforeseen, and most disastrous in its consequences to France, occurred at this period, which completely disconcerted the designs of the French government, and gave a new aspect to the affairs of Europe.

The French admiral, Brueys, after disembarking, with the happiest fortune, the French troops under his convoy, arrived in the Bay of

* Intercepted Correspondence.

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Aboukir on the 7th of July, forming a line of battle, with the headmost ship as close as possible to a shoal, to the north-west, and the rest of the fleet describing a curve along the line of deep water, flanked by numerous gun-boats, and a battery of shells and mortars, on an island in the van. In this position admiral Brueys remained till the 31st of July—confident, no doubt, in his own strength, as he had time more than sufficient to have taken refuge, conformably to the earnest entreaty of General Bonaparte, either in Corfu or Malta.

Total defeat of the French fleet, by admiral Nelson, at Aboukir.

On the 1st of August the English fleet came in sight, and, upon a near approach, admiral Nelson determined upon attempting a dangerous manœuvre, which, if successful, must be decisive, and which could be prompted only by that high and heroic species of courage which borders upon the limits of a noble temerity. Having made himself acquainted, by repeated trials, of the depth of water near the shoal, the signal was daringly made, and as daringly executed, to turn the head of the French line; by which means the whole of the enemy's van was attacked on both sides, before any other of the French ships (rendered useless by being at anchor) could move to their assistance. The action commenced a little before sun-set, and, situated as the two fleets now were, victory soon

declared itself in favor of England. The French however continued fighting with the rage of desperation. Before eight the fleets were engaged throughout the whole extent of the line—the cannonading on both sides was incessant and tremendous. The French admiral's ship having taken fire, the whole horizon seemed in flames. Admiral Brueys himself was killed by a cannon-ball; and admiral Gantheaume, second in command, finding it impossible to stop the progress of the conflagration, quitted the vessel with difficulty, accompanied by a small part of the crew, and about half past nine she blew up, with an explosion which was plainly heard at Rosetta, ten miles distant. A sudden and horrific pause ensued, expressive of the feelings excited by this most melancholy, yet beyond conception magnificent, spectacle. The battle was then renewed with tenfold fury, and prosecuted with short intervals till day-break, by which time almost all the French ships had struck their colours, after losing most of their officers and vast numbers of their men—the vessels themselves being nearly dismasted, and lying mere wrecks upon the water. Two line-of-battle ships, and two frigates, only escaped from the general destruction of this dreadful battle, which will ever rank in celebrity with the most famous naval engagements ever fought in any age of the world,

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or by any nations of antient or modern times. The persevering valor of the vanquished, which lasted long after all hopes of success on their part had ceased, was truly astonishing, and caused the victory of the English to be dearly purchased with the lives of nine hundred brave sailors; but the loss of the enemy was incalculable. Admiral Nelson himself received a dangerous wound on the head on this occasion, which disabled him from the command during the latter part of the action; but his first captain, Berry, gave full proof that he was actuated by the same ardent zeal and heroic spirit. The English admiral, after leaving a squadron to block up the ports of Alexandria and Rosetta, sailed, with such of his prizes as he could bring away, for Europe, in order to refit.

Extraordinary effects resulting from the defeat of the French fleet.

The intelligence of this astonishing disaster threw the whole French army, excepting the general himself, into consternation. His dispatches upon this occasion to the Directory discover the most admirable firmness and fortitude. He congratulates them on the previous landing of the troops; and will not for a moment admit the desponding idea, that the object of the expedition is frustrated. "To England (as he declares) is decreed the empire of the seas, —to France that of the land." And, in allusion to the rash determination of admiral Brueys

to await the arrival of the British fleet, he says, "if in this fatal event he had his faults, he has expiated them by a glorious death." "This disaster," as the French officer, before cited, M. Lacuée, affirms, "would deprive the army of every hope, if they were not acquainted with the genius of the commander-in-chief." BOOK XXIV. 1798.

It appears probable that the French government had flattered itself with the idea that the Sublime Porte, sensible of the extreme importance of keeping up an amicable connection with France, as well as of the insignificance of that shadow of authority which she retained in Egypt, would have condescended to accept of the apologies made by the republic for the invasion of that country, in which France professed to oppose, not the power of the grand-seignor, but that of the Beys and Mamelouks, the real possessors of the whole. On the contrary, however, the intelligence of this invasion was heard at Constantinople with the greatest indignation; but fear kept that proud and barbarous court silent, till the tidings of the victory at Aboukir encouraged her to give vent to her impotent though passionate resentment. On the 1st of September an imperial decree was published, declaring the deposition of the grand-vizier (Mehemed Pacha), who, it is asserted, "had

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not observed the instructions given him, to attend to the defence of the Ottoman dominions; so that, in the dark himself with respect to the evil designs of those *brutish infidels* the French, he did not in good time apprize the inhabitants of Egypt thereof. When the unhappy tidings from thence came to our imperial ear," says this imperial mandate, "a full month after that insufferable event had come to pass, such were our grief and concern, that, we take God to witness! it drew tears from our eyes, and deprived us of sleep and rest. We have therefore immediately deposed him from the office of grand-vizier, and have appointed *in his place* Youssouf Pacha, governor of Erzerum. Now it being incumbent upon all true believers to combat those *faithless brutes* the French, and it being become a positive duty for our imperial person to deliver the blessed territories from their accursed hands, and to revenge the insults which they have offered to mussulmans, no delay whatever is to take place for the arrival of the new vizier; but the most vigorous measures must be pursued, to attack them by sea and land. Wherefore, by a deliberation with the illustrious lawyers, ministers, and chieftains, our subjects, you must, with a full confidence in God and his prophet, fix upon the effectual means of freeing the province of Egypt from the presence of such

wretches. You will acquaint all the true believers, in the respective quarters, that we are at war with the French; and, turning night into day, will apply your utmost efforts to take revenge of them." BOOK XXIV. 1798.

At the same time, to testify his high sense of the service recently performed by admiral Nelson, the grand-seignor directed a superb diamond *chelengk*, or plume of triumph, to be taken from one of the imperial turbans, and sent to the admiral, together with a robe of honor of sable fur; besides a purse of 2,000 sequins to be distributed among the wounded of his crew.

The blind and furious resentment of the Ottoman Porte against France incited them to acts of the greatest political folly. A Russian squadron of 12 sail of the line, under admiral Ouschakoff, was permitted, for the first time, to sail through the Dardanelles, which, in conjunction with their new allies the Turks, reduced the Venetian islands of Cerigo, the antient Cytherea, Zante, Cephalenia, and at length Corfu —the possession of which important place apparently secured to them a permanent establishment in the Mediterranean.

Had the French, in planning their Egyptian expedition, really been actuated,—which no nation ever has, or ever will be,—by the sole and beneficent motive of giving liberty to an

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oppressed people; and had the Egyptians been capable of comprehending the nature and value of the gift; it would undoubtedly have demanded and deserved the applause and admiration of the universe. "The Turkish government," to adopt the impressive language of a celebrated writer, "is a tyranny under which the finest countries, in the most genial climate of the world, are wasted by peace more than any countries have been by war,—where arts are unknown, where manufactures languish, where science is extinguished, where agriculture decays, where the human race itself melts away, and perishes under the eye of the observer *." It must nevertheless be allowed, that Bonaparte was no vulgar conqueror, and that he aspired, in a country where, as he himself expresses it, "barbarism was at its height," to introduce the arts of civilization, the knowledge of jurisprudence, and the practice and love of industry. "In the expedition of Bonaparte into Egypt," says one of the most distinguished of his companions in arms, "the world saw, for the first time, the sciences and arts joining the march of a conqueror †."

* Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution."

† General Regnier's "State of Egypt," &c. p. 103, Introduction.

The communication of Alexandria with Rosetta by sea being cut off, the French general caused the canal which led from Alexandria to Rhamanieh, across the Desert, to be repaired and cleansed. Left entirely to his own resources, he seemed to continue with greater ardor and activity his civil and military operations. At Belbeis and Salahieh he constructed forts and redoubts to guard against the attacks of the Turks on the side of Syria; and drew plans for the better defence of Grand Cairo and Alexandria. He formed also a great establishment for the different mechanical arts, in which he was assisted by the artists and scientific men who had accompanied the expedition, and with the aid of whom he formed a national institute. At his invitation the Schieks from different provinces assembled at Cairo, where Monge and Berthollet submitted to their deliberations various questions of political œconomy, and regulations of administrative government. Every art of courtesy and of policy was put in practice to acquire the confidence of the natives, but with little apparent success. The French were still regarded as intruders and usurpers, and nothing could reconcile the minds of the Egyptians, blindly and obstinately attached to the Mahometan superstition, to the government of strangers and infidels. On the 13th of August,

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general Bonaparte visited the great pyramid, styled the pyramid of Cheops, accompanied by divers of the principal muftis and imans of the city of Grand Cairo. On this occasion a conversation passed of which a curious and detailed account was subsequently published. It is pretended that, in the course of this conference, Bonaparte hesitated not to make use of the following expressions:—"Glory to ALLAH! There is no God but God; Mahomed is his prophet, and I am his friend."—"The divine koran is the delight of my soul, and the object of my contemplation. I love the prophet, and I hope ere long to see and honor his tomb in the holy city: but my mission is first to exterminate the Mamelouks."—"Adriel, the angel of death, has breathed upon them. We are come, and they have disappeared.—Be faithful to ALLAH, the sovereign ruler of the seven marvellous heavens, and to Mahomed his prophet, who traversed all the celestial mansions in one night. Be the friends of the Franks, and ALLAH, Mahomed, and the Franks, will recompence you," &c. &c.

This was carrying religious and political complaisance—so opposite to the intolerant spirit usually characteristic of conquerors—to very extraordinary lengths: yet little ground appeared after all to be gained; and the same rooted hatred of the French almost universally prevail-

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cularizing the possessions of the ecclesiastical princes. After much time fruitlessly spent in discussing this endless topic of disputation, the French were desired to state their ulterior demands. This was done on the 13th of May, by a note, containing the following requisitions: 1st, The navigation of the Rhine to be common to both nations, suppressing the right of tolls altogether. 2dly, To leave all the islands of the Rhine in possession of the republic. 3dly, To retain possession of the fort of Kehl, and the territory contiguous on the German side of the Rhine; likewise of the suburb of Cassel, opposite to the city of Mentz. 4thly, To demolish the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, now closely blockaded by the French.

These extortionate demands gave great and just offence, not only to the Deputation, but also to the courts of Vienna and Berlin: and the conqueror of Italy having now departed on his romantic expedition, the language of the Deputation, secretly encouraged, no doubt, by the emperor, began to assume a firmer tone. The ambassadors of Austria and Prussia remonstrated in formal and official memorials against these conditions, as ignominious to the empire, and fatal no less to her safety than her honor. Ehrenbreitstein, Kehl, and Cassel, were the bulwarks of the empire on the side of

France; and to require the cession or the demolition of these antient fortresses, was in effect to claim a free entrance into the heart of Germany whenever it suited the selfish or ambitious purposes of France. BOOK XXIV. 1798.

After new and lengthened discussion, the Deputation consented to the demolition of Ehrenbreitstein; and the French agreed to a division of the islands in the river, and to relinquish the territory adjoining to Kehl; but neither would the Deputation nor the Imperial minister accede to the cession of that fortress or of Cassel. After some time the French made (September 14) the farther concession, that the fortresses of Kehl and Cassel should also be demolished, instead of being given up; and, in a note presented on the 3d of October, some other points in dispute, of inferior consequence, were either modified or changed. But the Directory, by their incapacity and want of discernment, had suffered the favorable moment to elapse. By the display of an ambition no less impolitic than unprincipled, they had again awakened the spirit of resistance in the court of Vienna, which had recently entered into very intimate connections with the court of St. Petersburg; and the victory of Aboukir had already laid the foundation of a new confederacy against France, infinitely more justifiable in it-

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1798. A variety of messages and memorials having passed without effect, the French plenipotentiaries, on the 7th of December, presented their ultimatum, to which an answer was peremptorily demanded in six days. The majority of the Deputation, including the minister of Prussia, tolerably satisfied with the conditions now offered, and dreading the renewal of the war, agreed to the propositions of the ultimatum. But the ministers of Austria, Saxony, and Hanover, protested against all further cession,—the count Lehrbach, the Imperial minister, declaring that the contingent of Austria was ready to march, in order to protect the empire from further aggression. The French ministers had now wasted a year in disputes respecting the property of the swamps and morasses that obstruct the course of the Rhine, and other points of controversy either scandalously unjust or ridiculously insignificant, when the march of the Russians, which had for many weeks and even months engaged the attention of Europe, seemed at length to be deemed worthy of notice by the Directory.

In a note remitted January 1, 1799, to the Deputation of the empire, the French plenipo-

tentiaries made a formal declaration, "that if the Diet of Ratisbon consented to the entrance of the Russian troops on the territory of the empire, or did not, by every means in their power, give it their strenuous opposition, that such entrance would be considered by France as a violation of neutrality on the part of the empire." The Deputation, without any debate, voted that the note should be sent to Ratisbon, and referred to the emperor and the Diet.

In a particular communication to the Imperial minister on the 10th of January, the French ministers say, "they had orders to declare to him, that, in leaving a free passage to the army of a power which had declared war against France, and by permitting such an army to cross his state, in order to reach the French troops, the emperor put the republic under the necessity of considering this act as a rupture of the ties which bound both states."

At this very time the Russians were in full march towards the frontier of Bavaria. The French troops therefore passed again to the right side of the Rhine; and the impregnable fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, reduced to the last extremity by famine, surrendered to the arms of France, after a resistance of eighteen months. Matters were now hasting fast to a crisis. The Austrians, under general Bellegarde, had al-

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ready, at "the formal request of the Grison government *," actually taken possession of Coire, and the important post of Richensu; detachments being at the same time on their march to occupy the rest of the Grison country.

In answer to the French memorial, the Imperial court declared its "astonishment that the French should have conceived the idea of addressing the Deputation of the empire on a subject which had no relation with their mission; expressing its satisfaction that the Deputation had referred this business, which was beyond its competence, to those whom it concerned." The Deputation also coincided with the opinion of the Austrian cabinet, and affirmed, "that the march of the Russian troops was beyond its competence." On the 31st of January, the French plenipotentiaries presented a declaration to the Deputation, importing, "that they had orders neither to receive nor remit any note on any of the points of the negotiation till that which they had remitted on the 1st of January, respecting the march of the Russians, had received a catego-

* Such, at least, is the assertion of the London Gazette, November 13, 1798; the article containing this important intelligence, which so strongly portended the renewal of the war, being dated from Vienna, so early as October 27.

rical and satisfactory answer." On the same day a message was likewise delivered to the Austrian minister, count Lehrbach, in which the French plenipotentiaries declared, "that if in fifteen days from the date of their letter the emperor had not compelled the Russian troops to evacuate the Austrian territory, and such of his other states as made part of the German empire, hostilities should forthwith begin between him and the French republic."—The emperor having now concerted his measures, deigned not to make any reply to this menace: and the term specified having elapsed, the French armies began their march into Suabia, under general Jourdan.

Revival of the war in Germany and Italy.

Hostilities had some months previous to this period actually commenced in Italy. It is necessary to premise, that in the spring of the present year a serious dispute arose between the king of Sardinia and the new Ligurian republic, occasioned by the encouragement given by the latter to the disaffected and revolutionary spirit of the Piedmontese, which discovered itself in insurrectionary movements. Hostilities had been openly commenced, when the Sardinian monarch implored, as the last humiliating resource now left him, the mediation and protection of the French government. This was grant-

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ed only on the condition that the citadel of Turin should be confided to the care of a French garrison. The gates were opened to them on the 28th of June. Thus the king of Sardinia continued to reign nominally, while the French were in reality masters of the country.

During these transactions, the Roman republic exhibited a scene of dilapidation and oppression beyond example. In what proportion the public distress was to be ascribed to the French government, or to the government of Rome established and supported by the power of France, is of little importance to ascertain. Probably the balance of injustice would be found, on examination, very equal. The disastrous measures of finance adopted by Faypoult, the chief of the French commissariate, were productive of ruin to individuals; and the plunder and corruption of the subordinate agents completed the picture of the public misery; and, together with the persecutions exercised against all who showed any disposition adverse to these proceedings, excited continual disturbances and insurrections, and destroyed every hope of establishing any rational system of liberty. The venerable names of senate, tribunate, and consulate, served only to remind the inhabitants of Rome of their degraded con-

dition, and answered no other purpose than to add insult to injury, and contumely to oppression.

The Neapolitan forces under the Imperial general Mack, with the previous and express approbation of the court of Vienna, which engaged by treaty to furnish his Sicilian majesty with 16,000 troops, had been for some time past collecting on the frontier of the Roman republic. In the month of November, Mack sent a formal summons to general Championet, who commanded in this quarter, to withdraw his troops from the Roman territory. To which Championet replied, "that such a summons could only be regarded as an act of aggression, and a direct violation of the subsisting treaties." In reply to this declaration, general Mack, on the 24th of November, signified to general Championet, that his Neapolitan majesty had in person passed the frontier on the preceding day, to take possession of the Roman territory, revolutionised and usurped since the peace of Campo Formio. The number of French troops in the Roman state did not exceed ten thousand: and so little political discernment had the Directory, or so defective was their information, that these were very ill armed and provided. The public magazines were empty, Civita Vecchia itself left defenceless; and the invasion of the Neapolitans,

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who had collected on this occasion their whole military force—a rabble of 60 or 70,000 men, without skill, courage, or discipline, was evidently to the French government a most unwelcome and unexpected measure, productive of great political embarrassment.

The state of things in Europe, since the victory of Aboukir, had its effect also upon the mind of the monarch of Sardinia, whose conduct had been for some time very obnoxious to the French, and in whose dominions evident symptoms appeared of a counter-revolutionary spirit. Couriers were known frequently to pass between the two courts of Naples and Turin, and letters were intercepted which plainly proved the good understanding subsisting between them. In one of these, dated October the 6th (1798), written by baron Averveck, a Neapolitan nobleman, to the governor of Turin, it is said, "The ambassador from the court of London to Berlin has just concerted with prince Repnin a measure the most bold that modern diplomacy could suggest in the present circumstances, to put an end, as it were, by force, to the indecision of Austria. They will cause hostilities immediately to be commenced by the court of Naples. A treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, between these two powers, will authorize his Sicilian majesty again to call to his aid the Austrian con-

tingent. Then all Europe will be put in motion upon the shores of the Bosphorus, as well as upon those of the Danube, upon the banks of the Nieper as upon those of the Rhine, in order to precipitate themselves, *en masse*, upon that nation of usurpers.—Such, sir, is the plan concerted by the vast genius of prince Repnin, and of which you now see the first openings."

Immediately on the intelligence being received in Paris, that the Neapolitans had passed the frontier, war was declared in form against their Sicilian and Sardinian majesties,—the Directory denouncing in their manifesto "the long train of perfidies of which the court of Naples had been guilty, and which were now brought to the height by an audacious attack upon the French republic;—a court, which, during the whole course of the war of the coalesced monarchs, distinguished itself by the most insensate fury against the republic, notwithstanding which the French government made no other use of the superiority which victory gave them than for the purpose of moderation." They then enumerate the recent instances in which the court of Naples had shewn its ingratitude—"inciting and encouraging the Romans to revolt, and displaying its hostility to the Ligurian and Cisalpine republics.—While she dared not openly to declare war against France,

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she sought to destroy in Italy all the free states which were under her protection. Instead of inflicting signal vengeance for this conduct, the Directory did not oppose the taking possession of the duchy of Benevento; they offered their mediation to deliver the king of Naples from the feudal pretensions of Rome. They sent to Naples a new ambassador (M. Garat), furnished with the most amicable and conciliatory powers, and were anxious to give satisfaction to his Sicilian majesty respecting the object of Bonaparte's expedition. In return, the fleet of admiral Nelson was honorably received at Syracuse, and was revictualled in that port. It even received stores from the arsenal of the king, pilots to clear the Straits of Messina, and whatever was necessary to secure the success of the attack against the French. If too we recollect the inconceivable joy which was manifested at Naples on the sight of the English fleet, the public honors which the court itself lavished on admiral Nelson, in going out to welcome him, his triumphal entry, the large rewards granted to the messenger who brought the first account of this victory, and the illuminations and rejoicings which took place on this occasion;—if it be remembered that, from the time of this victory, the audacity of the Neapolitan government has known no bounds;—if all these cir-

cumstances are considered, it must be allowed that more hostile sentiments were never manifested on one side, nor more patience shown on the other. The guilt of the Sardinian government, as an accomplice with Naples, is manifest from a thousand circumstances;—its sentiments, its language, and even its actions, in proportion to its means, have been the same; and its artifice and hypocrisy exactly resemble that of Naples. In fact, they have never ceased to make war in every way which their imbecility and their cowardice suffered them to put into execution. The Piedmontese troops marched towards Loana at the same moment in which the Neapolitan army attacked the French;—and in the same moment also it was that the Sardinian government dared to require the evacuation of the citadel, and the diminution of the French troops in Piedmont." 1798.

Of the inimical disposition of the king of Sardinia, with respect to France, there can exist no possibility of doubt; but the indications of that disposition, as stated at length in this manifesto, though strong, were perhaps not altogether such as would justify the declaration of open hostility on the part of the Directory. The king of Sardinia appears to have been a man very inconstant in his designs, and inconsistent in his conduct. He had done enough to give great and

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just offence to a proud and potent enemy, without possessing either strength or courage to abide the consequences. On the entrance of the French troops into Piedmont, in the month of December, without any attempt at resistance, or appearance of coercion, he signed an act of abdication, and surrendered his whole country into the hands of the French. The Piedmontese troops, agreeably to the terms of the act, immediately adopted the French colours, and became a component part of the French army in Italy.

Whatever may have been the secret design of the Directory respecting Piedmont, they certainly were far from wishing to break with the government of Naples. They had even paid assiduous court to that government when it was manifestly in their power to attack that kingdom with every advantage. The reason is clear. The remote situation of Naples made it both inconvenient and hazardous for France to carry on a war with that corrupt and debilitated state for any length of time. Conquests made there could not be permanent, nor could they be useful while they were retained. The misfortunes of the reigns of Charles VIII. and Louis XII. were not yet forgotten. The policy of the Directory therefore, as of their predecessors in power, the legislative and conventional

assemblies, had, in relation to Naples, been that of exemplary mildness and moderation. But the late deliberate and unprovoked aggression of the weak, rash, and misguided sovereign of the Sicilies awakened all the republican resentment and energy; and the manifesto denounced, that this court, too long spared, would at length receive the reward of its demerits.

Neapolitan army enters Rome.

The main body of the Neapolitan army, with the monarch at their head, accompanied by general Mack, entered Rome without opposition on the 29th of November, whilst the combined fleets of England and Naples took possession of the port of Leghorn. The French, unable to make any resistance to so immense a superiority of numbers, had retreated towards Civita-Castellana, leaving a garrison in the castle of St. Angelo. During the occupation of Rome by the king of Naples, different detachments of the Neapolitan army had been defeated by the French generals Lemoine and Rusca; and reinforcements now arriving from all parts, a general attack upon the Sicilians took place throughout their whole line of posts. In the various combats which ensued, the army of Naples suffered immense loss—12,000 prisoners falling into the hands of the French, and 100 pieces of cannon. His Sicilian majesty now evacuated Rome with the greatest precipitation,

Defeat of the Neapolitans.

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and was pursued with equal vigor by the French. On the 31st of December, an armistice, limited or illimited, was offered by general Mack, in a letter written from Capua, on pretext of the severity of the weather and badness of the roads. General Championet returned for answer, "that as his army had so far overcome the difficulties both of the way and the weather, he should not halt till he made his entrance into Naples."

Soon after this interchange of messages, the strong post of Gaeta was taken, containing immense magazines and stores of every kind;—another body of troops, under general Duhesme, which had forced its way with great resolution and success along the line of the Adriatic coast, through a country intersected with rivers, and guarded by troops which might have disputed every step, gaining a complete victory on the banks of the Vomano, and taking possession of the important maritime fortress of Pescara. The king of the Sicilies, with the royal family, accompanied by the Austrian, Russian, and British ambassadors, had embarked on board the British ships in the harbour on the eve of the 1st of January, 1799, and been safely landed at Palermo. On the 10th an armistice was concluded with general Championet, notwithstanding his haughty rejection of the former overture, in consequence of which Capua was surrendered to the French;

Capua surrendered to the French.

but for this necessary measure the viceroy of Naples, prince Pignatelli, was severely reproached by the monarch, in a letter written from the place of his retreat: and the armistice was broken almost as soon as it was signed. The Neapolitan army being now completely disorganized, and the city and kingdom of Naples in a state of absolute anarchy, the viceroy secretly withdrew from the capital; and general Mack, against whom the popular rage was chiefly directed, thought proper to surrender himself to general Championet. Nothing now remained but the conquest of the metropolis—the citadel of St. Elmo having been already secured by the patriots: and the summons to surrender being rejected, every thing was prepared for the assault, which took place on the night of the 23d of January. The city, although deserted by all who had any real interest in its safety, was defended with astonishing resolution and bravery for many hours by the Lazaroni. The combat lasted till after the dawn of day, when the passages to the Castel Nuovo, and the Fort del Camine, being forced by the bayonet, liberal terms were offered to these poor wretches, now nearly surrounded, by the French general, who declared at the same time his high respect for St. Januarius. A shout of acclamation succeeded; and the Lazaroni immediately laid down

Naples taken by storm.

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their arms, protesting that they were friends of liberty and the French, and wondering how they could have been so long deceived. The day succeeding the cessation of hostilities, the cardinal archbishop of Naples having solemnized the entrance of the French into that city by assisting in person at a grand mass and Te Deum, the army of Rome was proclaimed the army of Naples, and this was immediately followed by another proclamation for establishing a provisional government in the NEAPOLITAN REPUBLIC.

Subversion of the regal government.

To conclude the history of this memorable year, it is necessary to observe, that on the 18th of December, at the moment probably of exultation on receiving the triumphant intelligence of the march of the Sicilians into Rome, a provisional treaty was signed at St. Petersburg between the emperor Paul and the king of Great Britain, conformably to the tenor of which the two high contracting powers engage "to employ all their endeavours to induce the king of Prussia to take an active part against the common enemy. Immediately, on his Prussian majesty's consenting to this measure, his Imperial majesty of all the Russias is ready to afford him a succour of land forces; and he destines, for that purpose, 45,000 men, infantry and cavalry, with the necessary artillery. In consideration of this service, his Britannic majesty engages to furnish his ma-

Treaty between Great Britain and Russia.

jesty the emperor a subsidy of 75,000*l.* sterling per month, from the day on which the Russian troops shall have passed the frontier: Also another subsidy of 37,500*l.* per month for extra charges during all the time that the said troops shall be employed by virtue of this treaty: Also the further sum of 225,000*l.* in three months, to expedite the march of the troops to be employed in *the good cause*. And even previous to the termination of the negotiation with Prussia, the emperor *magnanimously* promises that the said troops shall be put upon such a footing that, *agreeably to the stipulations of the treaty*, they may immediately be employed wherever the utility of the common cause shall require."—The firmness of the king of Prussia, in resisting this overture, together with the mild and guarded terms in which he expressed his refusal, so as not merely to avoid offence, but to maintain as strict a friendship with the courts of Russia and Great Britain after as before this embarrassing proposition was made to him, established his reputation as a wise and discerning statesman—fully justifying the high and sanguine hopes which his renowned predecessor Frederic the Great is known to have entertained respecting him. "Endeavouring," as an historian of high rank and undoubted information expresses himself, "rather to restore tranquillity to Europe by

Wise conduct of the king of Prussia.

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his influence than to trouble it by his ambition, he firmly persisted, in spite of the intrigues of England and the councils of some violent men, in a system of neutrality which he pursued from prudence, but which his predecessor had adopted only from inconstancy *."

Thus, by the profligate ambition and presumption of the French Directory on the one part, and the pride, folly, and mischievous activity of the British administration on the other, was a war, which appeared well nigh terminated, recommenced with additional fury;—seeming but too likely to extend to a long succession of calamitous and mournful years, destined to be recorded in letters of blood. But the terrified imagination sees pourtrayed, on the veil which conceals futurity from mortal view, frightful forms and ominous characters, bearing little resemblance to the events actually pre-ordained, in the course of human affairs, to take place.

* Count de SEGUR's History of Frederic William II. Vol. III. p. 226.

END OF THE TENTH VOLUME.

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